



Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Monday, February 10, 2014



A team of women working for the Emergency Snow Laborers program clear a bus stop in New York. The overabundance of snow that has shuttered schools and snarled mass transit turned into an unexpected boon for some of the city's unemployed, with the Sanitation Department hiring 518 laborers for snow clearing work. (Ozier Muhammad/The New York Times)

© 2014 New York Times
NEW YORK - Nadji Colon never saw snow until he arrived in the Bronx in his late 20s from his homeland, Puerto Rico. He found it cold, slushy and unpleasant to pick his way through. But this winter, it cannot snow enough for him. Colon, now 36 and unemployed, earns \$12 an hour - \$4 more than the state's minimum wage - to shovel snow in the Bronx through a seasonal labor program run by the city's Department of Sanitation.

Continued on Page 4



EXPERTS PONDER IF THE DEMISE OF SMOKING IS HERE

Page 6



NEW MICROSOFT CEO'S COLLEGIAL STYLE GIVES HOPE

Page 25

Fans shun Sochi over bombs, bureaucracy, big bucks

JOHN LEICESTER
Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia (AP)— When Sven Kramer wins Olympic gold, he likes to celebrate by communing with the Dutch fans who worship him. Four years ago at the Vancouver Games, 3,000 packed a cavernous hall and went wild when Kramer appeared. At the Sochi Olympics, Kramer again partied with his flock after leading a Dutch sweep of medals in the 5,000 meters. But what

and in the Caucasus Mountains. Some Olympic venues have a very Russian feel. Figure-skating crowds, for example, seem to be almost exclusively Russian. On the first evening of competition, even four women waving a French tricolor for France's skating team turned out to be Russians from Moscow. Many foreigners who have made it to Sochi fall into three camps: experienced world travelers who aren't

at least five other people who applied to her travel agent, but only one of them ended up joining her. Including hotel, flights and a \$2,000 ticket to the opening ceremony and others for figure skating, she calculated the cost of her 5-night stay in Sochi at \$18,000. Taguchi said that is four times what she spent at the 2012 London Games, where she found a cheap bed and breakfast, traveled on public transport and bought black-

tried to force his flight to divert to Sochi. The delay caused Van Meer's group to miss their Krasnodar-to-Sochi train. Once in the Olympic city, they waited 30 minutes to collect the special passes spectators need as well as tickets to get through security. The first four races at the speedskating arena were already finished when the party arrived, faces haggard but nevertheless radiant in the colors of Dutch fans everywhere:

traveled for free like him, courtesy of the auto manufacturer whose cars he sells in the Netherlands.

"A lot of people were invited. They canceled," he said. Casting a glance at his 20 or so travel companions, all dressed like him in orange, he added: "These are the die-hards."

Others said they wrestled with Russian paperwork, visas and the spectator pass. "The process took a bit of time. I had to have confirmed accommodation and I had to have Olympic tickets, and then I had to apply for a visa," said Magali Robert of Calgary, Alberta, whose 18-year-old daughter is a ski jump fore-runner — sent down the hill to test conditions before Olympians compete.

"Then it was a question of getting the flights. They are very expensive from Canada, and it's not easy to get here. That was probably the biggest stumbling block for a lot of people."

Sochi organizers said about 40,000 people attended events on Day 1, but 4,000 others who had tickets did not turn up. Spokeswoman Alexandra Kosterina said Russians tend to cut things close. "We had an issue with a lot of spectators being late."

Organizers say 70 percent of tickets went to Russians, with the rest sold abroad.

"Tickets are nearly sold out in many countries," organizers said in a statement to The Associated Press. "Japan and Germany have reported that they have sold their quotas. Tickets also sell well in European countries, Canada and the U.S. But there will be spectators from exotic countries like Tanzania, Lebanon, Oman and Namibia."

Still, some clearly thought twice.

In Vancouver, the beer-and-party hall where Kramer and other Dutch medalists wowed fans held 3,000 people and it was "packed every evening. We had queues of 3-4 hours," said Mark Bogaerts, global event manager for Dutch brewer Heineken, which runs the venue. □



Under orange lighting, gold medallist Sven Kramer of the Netherlands, right, holds a commemorative plaque as he celebrates at the Holland House with silver medallist Jan Blokhuijsen, third left, and bronze medallist Jorrit Bergsma, fourth left in orange jersey, after winning the gold in the men's 5,000-meter speedskating race at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014. Kramer set a new Olympic record in the race.

(AP Photo/Matt Dunham)

was a roiling sea of people cheering him in Vancouver shrank to little more than a pond — although still a very happy and noisy pond — in Sochi.

Although these are early days at Russia's first Winter Games, indications are that some would-be spectators from overseas have stayed home, seemingly scared off by terrorist bombings,

pervasive security, knotty Russian bureaucracy and the big bucks needed to reach President Vladimir Putin's winter wonderland on the Black Sea coast

easily spooked; die-hard Olympic regulars who would travel to any host city; or corporate types and wealthier tourists who delegate travel logistics to others.

Spunky Japanese retiree Mitsuko Taguchi, 80, is in the first group. Having previously traveled to hotspots Afghanistan and Pakistan, she was unfazed by terror threats targeting the games.

But the expense of traveling to Sochi from the southern Japanese island of Kyushu made her wince. Taguchi said she knew of

market tickets.

"Very expensive here. I was surprised," she said after cheering on Japanese teenage skating phenom Yuzuru Hanyu.

To shave expense, Jan van Meer and his three friends — down from the group of 10 he traveled with to Vancouver — flew via Istanbul to Krasnodar, the regional capital, rather than direct to Sochi.

Unfortunately for them, their plane was made to circle for an hour over Istanbul while Turkish authorities dealt with a hijack attempt by a Ukrainian who

bright orange. They quickly cracked open beers.

"A lot of friends of mine, they didn't come," said Van Meer, who shelled out the euro equivalent of nearly \$7,000, about what he spent in Vancouver, for 10 days at his fifth Winter Games.

"A few didn't want to come because it was too expensive. Others were worried about the bombers."

Robert Visser said his wife pulled out after December suicide bombings killed 34 people in Volgograd, even though she could have

Scandal may hurt Christie's ability to push agenda

ANGELA DELLI SANTI
GEOFF MULVIHILL

Associated Press

TRENTON, New Jersey (AP)

— This is the year Chris Christie was planning to be more than just New Jersey's governor. Yet it turns out that high-profile investigations into his administration and campaign operation in a political payback case could make advancing his agenda a challenge.

Christie came off a decisive re-election victory in November already in the spotlight and with opportunities for some signature accomplishments. He became chairman of the Republican Governors Association, making him the chief fundraiser for the group in a year featuring 36 gubernatorial elections. His state hosted the first Super Bowl football game played outdoors in a cold-weather locale.

The stage was set for him to keep gaining exposure



New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, right, leaves a meeting in Keansburg, N.J., with residents whose homes in Keansburg were heavily damaged by Superstorm Sandy. Christie says he understands the frustration of Superstorm Sandy victims who still have not gotten their homes or their lives back together 15 months after the storm.

(AP Photo/Mel Evans)

ahead of a possible 2016 presidential bid and to claim a mandate on imposing his policies at home

in New Jersey.

The spotlight has indeed intensified for Christie — but it's due to scandal.

"This has become a major distraction for him and his team," said David Gergen, a political analyst who

served as a White House adviser to Republican Presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan and Democrat Bill Clinton. "They are having to fight back on various fronts."

Last month, emails revealed that Christie's staff was involved in ordering a September shutdown of access lanes to the George Washington Bridge — apparently for political retribution against a Democratic mayor. The result was massive days-long gridlock in the community of Fort Lee. Christie has denied any involvement.

Also last month, Hoboken Democratic Mayor Dawn Zimmer said two members of Christie's Cabinet told her the city's Superstorm Sandy hurricane relief aid would be tied to her support of a real estate development project. Christie's administration has denied her accusations. □

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City's Plethora Of Snow A Boon For The Jobless



Men shovel snow from a sidewalk in New York's Times Square. The overabundance of snow that has shuttered schools and snarled mass transit turned into an unexpected boon for some of the city's unemployed, with the Sanitation Department hiring 518 laborers for snow clearing work. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Continued from front

The program, called Emergency Snow Laborers, has recruited more than 1,800 New Yorkers to do their small part in a massive snow-clearing operation along 6,300 miles of streets in the five boroughs.

By noon Thursday last week, Colon and four other snow laborers, bundled in heavy jackets, knit caps, gloves and neon orange vests, had dug away ice and hardened snow from eight bus stops, eight fire hydrants and 14 crosswalks. They still had five hours to go.

"I wish it could keep snowing every day so I don't have to look for another job," said Colon, who previously worked as a barber, as he expertly handled an ice pick.

The overabundance of snow that has shuttered schools, snarled mass transit and drained salt supplies has also turned into an unexpected boon for many of the city's poor and unemployed. On Thursday last week, the Sanitation Department hired 518 snow laborers for the day, including 230 laborers in just the Bronx, which has an unemployment rate of 10.6 percent, the highest in the city. It was the 10th day this year the department had called out the laborers.

The snow laborers program, which was started in the 1990s, is financed through the department's \$57.3 million annual budget for snow operations. Keith Mellis, a spokesman, said that it was intended to supplement the efforts of 4,600 city sanitation employees during periods of particularly heavy snowfall or cleanup.

"We look at it as an extension of the department," he said. "We are the front lines, but the residents who make up this city are just as responsible as we are. We're one big team."

The jobs are open to any city resident 18 and over who has a valid identification and Social Security card, and does not require a physical fitness test

(though sanitation workers will ask applicants if they can perform physical labor). Mellis said that he was not aware of any laborer who incurred a major injury on the job, though some have slipped or fallen on the ice. The department supplies the shovels, picks, orange vests and gloves.

Rosario Polanco, 26, an immigrant from the Dominican Republic, and two other women worked alongside nine men on the Grand Concourse. Polanco, who lost her waitressing job eight months ago, said she needed the money to support herself and her 4-year-old son.

"It's not hard for me," she said. "Hard is when you're looking for a job and you're not finding it."

Colon's group of five hauled shovels and picks along the street, stopping from time to time to work a stubborn patch of ice. At a bus stop, they cleared away a mound of snow for Maria Soto, 82, who was pushing a stroller.

In return, Soto later treated all five of them to coffee at a bodega. She thanked one of the laborers, Marcus Velasquez, in Spanish, saying: "I wish that you could always be here to help and clean up."

Velasquez, 50, a married father of two, said he tried to shovel snow whenever he could to help out his neighbors as well as his family. He works part-time for a building maintenance company, earning \$35,000 to \$40,000 annually, because he cannot find a full-time job.

"Right now with this economy, you need a little extra thing coming to you," he said. "Sometimes your paycheck is not enough."

Velasquez added that he was looking forward to the coming weekend, when more snow was predicted. "I'm going to put more money in my pocket," he said.

Still, the snow is not for everyone.

Colon said he had invited his friends to join him. "They're like, 'No way,' because it's hard work," he said. "It's cold out here." □

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Holder applies same-sex marriage ruling to Justice

PETE YOST

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In an assertion of same-sex marriage rights, Attorney General Eric Holder is applying a landmark Supreme Court ruling to the Justice Department, announcing this weekend that same-sex spouses cannot be compelled to testify against each other, should be eligible to file for bankruptcy jointly and are entitled to the same rights and privileges as federal prison inmates in opposite-sex marriages.

The Justice Department runs a number of benefits programs, and Holder says same-sex couples will qualify for them. They include the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund and benefits to surviving spouses of public safety officers who suffer catastrophic or fatal injuries in the line of duty.

"In every courthouse, in every proceeding and in every place where a member of the Department of Justice stands on behalf of the United States, they will strive to ensure that same-sex marriages receive the same privileges, protections and rights as opposite-sex marriages under federal law," Holder said in prepared remarks to the Human Rights Campaign in New York. The advocacy group works on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equal rights.

Just as in the civil rights struggles of the 1960s, the stakes in the current generation over same-sex marriage rights "could not be higher," said Holder.

"The Justice Department's role in confronting discrimination must be as aggressive today as it was in Robert Kennedy's time," Holder

said of the attorney general who played a leadership role in advancing civil rights.

On Monday, the Justice Department will issue a policy memo to its employees instructing them to give lawful same-sex marriages full and equal recognition, to the greatest extent possible under the law.

Holder's address is the latest application of a Supreme Court ruling that struck down a provision in the Defense of Marriage Act defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

The decision applies to legally married same-sex couples seeking federal benefits.

After the Supreme Court decision last June, the Treasury Department and the IRS said that all legally married gay couples may file joint federal tax returns, even if they reside in states that do not recognize same-sex marriages. The Defense Department said it would grant military spousal benefits to same-sex couples. The Health and Human Services Department said the Defense of Marriage Act is no longer a bar to states recognizing same-sex marriages under state Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management said it is now able to extend benefits to legally married same-sex spouses of federal employees and annuitants.

Holder told his audience: —The Justice Department will recognize that same-sex spouses of individuals involved in civil and criminal cases should have the same legal rights as all other married couples, including the right to decline to give testimony that

might violate the marital privilege. Under this policy, even in states where same-sex marriages are not recognized, the federal gov-

ernment will not use state views as a basis to object to someone in a same-sex marriage from invoking this right. □



Attorney General Eric Holder testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington. In an assertion of same-sex marriage rights, Holder is applying a landmark Supreme Court ruling to the Justice Department, announcing this weekend that same-sex spouses cannot be compelled to testify against each other, should be eligible to file for bankruptcy jointly and are entitled to the same rights and privileges as federal prison inmates in opposite-sex marriages.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

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Experts increasingly contemplate end of smoking

MIKE STOBBE

AP Medical Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — U.S. health officials have begun to predict the end of cigarette smoking in America.

They have long wished for a cigarette-free America, but shied away from calling for smoking rates to fall to zero or near zero by any particular year. The power of tobacco companies and popularity of their products made such a goal seem like a pipe dream.

But a confluence of changes has recently prompted public health leaders to start throwing around phrases like “endgame” and “tobacco-free generation.” Now, they talk about the slowly-declining

adult smoking rate dropping to 10 percent in the next decade and to 5 percent or lower by 2050.

Acting U.S. Surgeon General Boris Lushniak last month released a 980-page report on smoking that pushed for stepped-up tobacco-control measures. His news conference was an unusually animated showing of anti-smoking bravado, with Lushniak nearly yelling, repeatedly, “Enough is enough!”

“I can’t accept that we’re just allowing these numbers to trickle down,” he said, in a recent interview with the AP. “We believe we have the public health tools to get us to the zero level.”

This is not the first time a U.S. health official has spo-



In this April 8, 2003 file photo, David Ozanich of Brooklyn smokes outside the Live Bait bar in New York after a city-wide ban on smoking in bars and restaurants went into effect. Laws banning smoking in restaurants, bars and workplaces have been successfully implemented in places across the country.

(AP Photo/Diane Bondareff)

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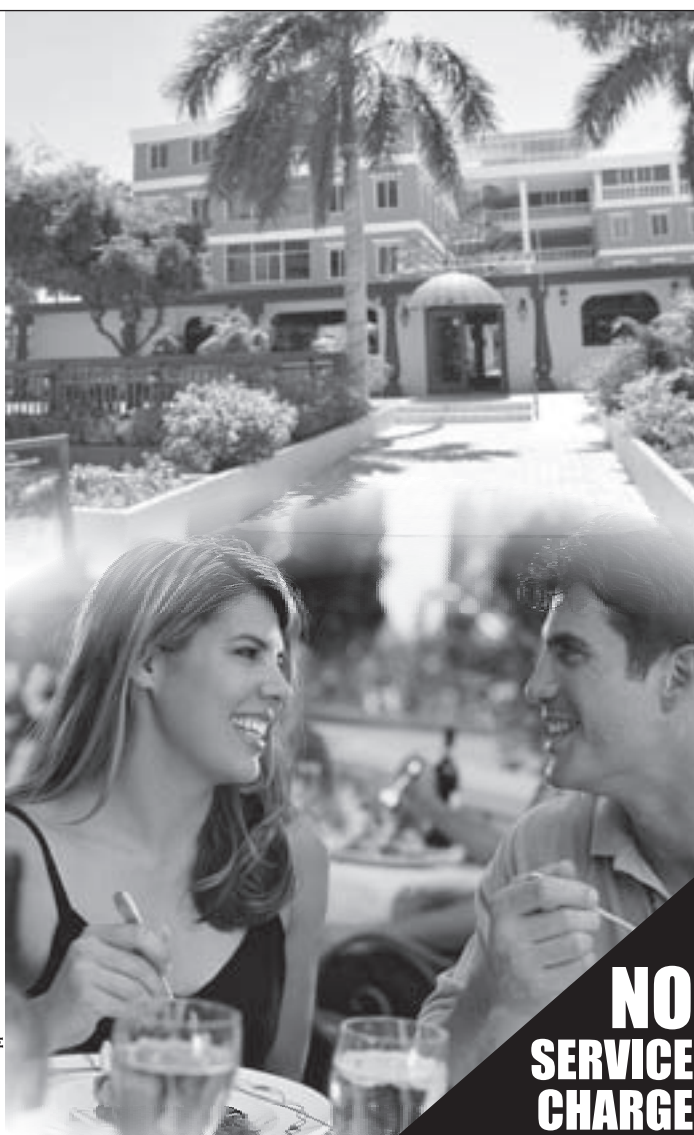
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ken so boldly. In 1984, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop called for a “smoke-free society” by the year 2000. However, Koop — a bold talker on many issues — didn’t offer specifics on how to achieve such a goal.

“What’s different today is that we have policies and programs that have been proven to drive down tobacco use,” said Matthew Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. “We couldn’t say that in 1984.” Among the things that have changed:

—Cigarette taxes have increased, making smokes more expensive. Though prices vary from state to state, on average a pack of cigarettes that would have sold for about \$1.75 20 years ago would cost more than triple that now.

—Laws banning smoking in restaurants, bars and workplaces have popped up all over America. Airline flights have long been off-limits for smoking.

—Polls show that cigarette smoking is no longer considered normal behavior, and is now less popular among teens than marijuana.

—Federal officials are increasingly aggressive about anti-smoking advertising. The Food and Drug Administration launched a new youth tobacco prevention campaign last week. At about the same time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention debuted a third, \$60-million round of its successful anti-tobacco ad campaign — this one featuring poignant, deathbed images of a woman featured in earlier ads.

—Tobacco companies, once considered impervious to legal attack, have suffered some huge defeats in court. Perhaps the biggest was the 1998 settlement of a case brought by more than 40 states demanding compensation for the costs of treating smoking-related illnesses. □

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US Financial Front:

American economy may be stuck in slow lane for long run

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the 4½ years since the Great Recession ended, millions of Americans who have gone without jobs or raises

Manufacturing has slumped. Fewer people are signing contracts to buy homes. Global stock markets have sunk as anxiety has gripped developing nations.

will hamper the economy's ability to accelerate. At the same time, the government may have to borrow more, raise taxes or cut spending to support Social Security and

government exerting less drag on the economy this year after having slashed spending and raised taxes in 2013.

In addition, steady job gains dating back to 2010 should unleash more consumer spending. Each of the 7.8 million jobs that have been added provided income to someone who previously had little or none.

And since 70 percent of the economy flows from consumers, their increased spending would be expected to drive stronger hiring and growth.

"There is a dividing line between a slow-growth economy that is not satisfactory and above-trend growth with a tide strong enough to lift all the boats and put people back to work," said Chris Rupkey, chief financial economist at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi. "That number is 3 percent."

The recovery had appeared to achieve a breakthrough in the final quarter of 2013. The economy grew at an annual pace of 3.2 percent last quarter. Leading the upswing was a 3.3 percent surge in the rate of consumer spending, which had been slack for much of the recovery partly because of high debt loads and stagnant pay.

Yet for now, winter storms and freezing temperatures, along with struggles in Europe and Asia, have slowed manufacturing and

the pace of hiring.

Just 113,000 jobs were added in January, the government said Friday. In December, employers had added a puny 75,000. Job creation for the past two months is roughly half its average for the past two years. A third sluggish jobs report in February would further dim hopes for a breakout year.

"Three months in a row would mean the job market is taking a turn for the worst," said Stuart Hoffman, chief economist for PNC Financial Services.

Former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers and Nobel Prize winner Paul Krugman have suggested that the economy might be in a semi-permanent funk. In November, Summers warned in a speech that the economy is trapped by "secular stagnation." By that, he meant a prolonged period of weak demand and slow growth.

If the United States hasn't already slipped into that period, the CBO predicts it could over the next four years. That's when the retirements of baby boomers would start to restrain growth.

The economy will expand 2.7 percent in 2017 before declining to an average of 2.2 percent through 2024, the CBO estimates. That's about as sluggish as the current recovery has been, on average, so far. □



Job seekers line up to meet a prospective employer at a career fair at a hotel in Dallas. Two straight weak job reports have raised doubts about economists' predictions of breakout growth in 2014. The global economy is showing signs of slowing again.

(AP Photo/LM Otero)

have found themselves wondering something about the economic recovery:

Is this as good as it gets? It increasingly looks that way.

Two straight weak job reports have raised doubts about economists' predictions of breakout growth in 2014. The global economy is showing signs of slowing — again.

Some long-term trends are equally dispiriting.

The Congressional Budget Office foresees growth picking up through 2016, only to weaken starting in 2017. By the CBO's reckoning, the economy will soon slam into a demographic wall: The vast baby boom generation will retire. Their exodus will shrink the share of Americans who are working, which

Medicare for those retirees. Only a few weeks ago, at least the short-term view looked brighter. Entering 2014, many economists predicted growth would top 3 percent for the first time since 2005. That pace would bring the U.S. economy near its average post-World War II annual growth rate. Some of the expected improvement would come from the

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NYC dealers blend in as heroin mills get sophisticated

TOM HAYS
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — In a major drug bust that drew little attention just a week before Philip Seymour Hoffman's death, authorities found a sophisticated

which authorities say are a sign of a well-oiled distribution network that caters to more mainstream, middle- and upper-class customers like the Oscar-winning Hoffman. Heroin dealers want to find

apartment building where a supplier lived. There's no evidence that the Bronx operation provided any heroin Hoffman might have bought. But New York has long been known as America's smack

Colombian-produced heroin by the kilogram. The wholesalers smuggle the drugs into the United States concealed in trucks, through tunnels dug under the southwest border and, in one recent case, by

cent years have found them in a newly renovated apartment in midtown Manhattan that rented for \$3,800 a month and in a two-story, red-brick home in the New York City suburb of Fort Lee, New Jersey.

A mill found in an 18th-floor apartment in upper Manhattan had a sign that read, "Clean Up After Yourself - The Management." At another discovered across the street from Manhattan College in the Bronx, immigrant workers wore school sweatshirts to try to blend in. Workers can make up to \$5,000 a week. They're also given meals and toiletries to help make it through 12-hour shifts. The mill operators and workers go out of their way not to disturb neighbors, who might report them to police, or to draw the attention of other criminals who want to rob them. They leave the apartments empty when not working, and sometimes change locations long before their leases are up as a cost of doing business, said James J. Hunt, the acting head of the DEA's New York office. "Drug dealers are very wary," Hunt said. "They wouldn't want word to get out on the street about a mill. They want anonymity."

The economics are addictive: The heroin flooding the region carries an average wholesale price of about \$60,000 per kilo. The retailers can cut a kilo to a 50 percent purity level using powdered vitamin B or other nontoxic substances. That provides enough drugs to fill 25,000 single-dose glassine envelopes that would be sold for \$5 each to street-level dealers, who in turn charge customers \$10 to \$15.

Continued on Page 27



A table with packaging materials for distribution of heroin is located in a Bronx apartment during a police raid of the location. According to prosecutors it was a sophisticated operation, where workers with coffee grinders and scales toiled around the clock to break down bricks of heroin into thousands of tiny, hit-sized baggies, bearing such stamped brands as "Government Shutdown" and "NFL." The death of actor Philip Seymour Hoffman has once again drawn attention to a New York City heroin trade so sophisticated that getting the drug delivered to your door is nearly as easy as ordering a pizza.

(AP Photo/Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor)

heroin packaging and distribution operation in an apartment in the Bronx. There, workers with coffee grinders, scoops and scales toiled around the clock to break down bricks of the drug into thousands of tiny, hit-size baggies, bearing such stamped brands as "Government Shutdown" and, in a nod to the Super Bowl, "NFL." The seizure of \$8 million worth of heroin was the result of the latest raid on heroin mills located behind the doors of New York homes,

customers with ready cash "who are going to be with them until they die," said city Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget Brennan. "That's the attitude." Tests are continuing to try to pinpoint how Hoffman died, but his body was found with a syringe in his arm and dozens of packets of heroin nearby. Where he got his drugs remains uncertain, but the arrests of drug suspects identified during the investigation suggest he might have visited a lower Manhattan

capital, regularly accounting for about 20 percent of the heroin the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration seizes every year. Those seizures have grown by 67 percent in the state over the last five years, a trend Brennan attributes in part to high-volume heroin mills invisible to most New Yorkers but capable of churning out hundreds of thousands of packets within days after a big shipment arrives. The pipeline starts in Mexico, where cartels traf-

molding and coloring the heroin to look like coffee beans and shipping it via UPS to a private postal box in Queens. In the Northeast, the cartels have increasingly supplied Dominican middlemen who rely on a business model for heroin mills that emphasizes discipline, quality control and an absence of violence. The retailers favor residential settings in safe neighborhoods as a means of cover. Raids by Brennan's office and the DEA in re-

600 evacuated from blockaded Syrian city of Homs

BARBARA SURK

DIAA HADID

BEIRUT (AP) — Hundreds of civilians were evacuated Sunday from the besieged Syrian city of Homs, braving gunmen spraying bullets and lobbing mortar shells to flee as part of a rare three-

leave opposition-held parts of the city, and to permit the entry of food and supplies.

Forces loyal to Assad have blockaded rebel-held parts of Homs for over a year, causing widespread hunger and suffering.

a government-held neighborhood.

The Syrian news agency SANA also reported that civilians came under fire, but blamed "terrorists," the government term for rebels.

At least four busloads of

civilians were shipped out, according to footage broadcast on the Lebanese television station al-Mayadeen. Wide-eyed children, their prominent cheekbones suggestive of malnutrition, tumbled out of a bus, assisted by aid workers.

"Our life was a disaster, we had no food, no water," one distressed woman said. "There was nothing, my children are all sick. They were thirsty," she said, standing with a group of exhausted-looking children as khaki-clad Syrian soldiers, Red Crescent workers in red jump suits and U.N. workers in blue protective vests gathered around the buses.

Some evacuees were to be hosted in government-run shelters, others were going to join relatives in safer areas, while still others said they did not know where they were going.

Khaled Erksoussi of the Syrian Red Crescent, which is assisting the operation, told the AP that the agency hoped to evacuate as many civilians as possible before the truce expires

Monday.

On Saturday, gunmen opened fire on civilians, leaving aid workers wounded and two trucks damaged, Erksoussi said, speaking by telephone from Damascus.

Despite the violence, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, said in a statement that the truce showed "that even in the darkest of nights it is possible to offer a glimmer of hope to people in desperate need of assistance."

The Homs cease-fire was arranged by U.N. mediator Lakhdar Brahimi, who urged the warring sides to aid the estimated 2,500 civilians trapped in the ancient, rebel-held quarters known as Old Homs, to build trust during the first face-to-face meetings of government officials and opposition figures in Switzerland last month.

But the truce only took hold after talks ended, and its last day, Monday, now coincides with the beginning of another round of U.N.-mediated negotiations in Switzerland. □



Syrian Arab Red Crescent members provide some food and drink to a man before he gets on a bus to evacuate the battleground city of Homs, Syria. Children, elderly women on wheelchairs and other civilians were evacuated from besieged neighborhoods of Syria's battleground city of Homs under a deal struck between the government and the opposition that also included a three-day cease-fire allowing aid convoys to enter.

(AP Photo)

day truce to relieve a choking blockade. Dozens were wounded as they fled.

The cease-fire came as Syrian officials arrived in Switzerland for a new round of talks with opposition activists-in-exile to try to negotiate an end to Syria's three-year conflict.

More than 600 people were evacuated from Homs on Sunday, said Governor Talal Barrazi. The operation was part of a U.N.-mediated truce that began Friday between the government of President Bashar Assad and armed rebels to allow thousands of women, children and elderly men to

Dozens of people were wounded when they came under fire as they waited at an agreed-upon evacuation point in the rebel-held neighborhood of al-Qarabis, according to three activists based in Homs, who spoke to The Associated Press by Skype.

Despite the gunfire and exploding mortar shells, hundreds of women, children and elderly men ran toward a group of Red Crescent workers waiting less than a mile (kilometer) away, said an activist who gave his name as Samer al-Homsi. The Syrian activists said the gunfire came from

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Witnesses:

9 more killed in C. African Republic

HIPPOLYTE MARBOUA

Associated Press

BANGUI, Central African Republic (AP) — Raging violence in Central African Republic's capital, including mob attacks and an apparent assassination attempt targeting the lawless country's former justice minister, killed at least nine people over the weekend, witnesses and officials said Sunday.

Bangui is suffering widespread bloodshed and looting despite the presence of thousands of French and African peacekeepers and the appointment of a new transitional leader last month.

On Sunday morning, Rwandan peacekeepers intervened after an angry mob killed a young Muslim man accused of killing a young woman, said Olga Mouth, a resident of Bangui's Fifth



At PK12, the last checkpoint at the exit of the town, the Christian crowd cheers as thousands of Muslim residents from Bangui and Mbaiki flee the Central African Republic town of Bangui in a mass exodus using cars, pickups, trucks, lorries and motorcycles, escorted by Chadian troops on Friday, Feb. 7, 2014.

(AP Photo/Jerome Delay)

District where the incident occurred.

"The young Muslim man was guarding two buildings belonging to Muslim businessmen who fled the city," Mouth said. "The crowd said he attacked

the young woman who was sitting outside the buildings selling porridge. This angered the residents, who came out in droves to lynch him before looting and burning the buildings." Rwandan peacekeepers opened fire on the crowd, killing a man who turned out to be the young woman's uncle, said Mouth.

However, Rwandan Lt. Rosana Nsengimana could only confirm Sunday that one Rwandan peacekeeper had been injured. Five additional bodies were retrieved from the same neighborhood, he said. "We don't know the circumstances in which these people were killed," he said.

Anti-Muslim violence has escalated in Bangui in recent months, prompting many Muslims to flee the city. On Friday, thousands climbed aboard trucks protected by heavily armed Chadian soldiers in a mass exodus, cheered on by crowds of Christians. The resentment stems from widespread atrocities committed by the mostly Muslim Seleka rebel coalition, which overthrew the president of a decade in March 2013 and replaced him with their leader, Michel Djotodia. □

Chikungunya virus advances through Eastern Caribbean

FRANCES ROBLES

© 2014 New York Times

MIAMI - A painful mosquito-borne virus common in Africa and Asia has advanced quickly throughout the eastern Caribbean in the past two months, raising the prospect that a once-distant illness will become entrenched throughout the region, public health experts say.

Chikungunya fever, a viral disease similar to dengue, was first spotted in December on the French side of St. Martin and has now spread to seven other countries, the authorities said. About 3,700 people are confirmed or suspected of having contracted it.

It was the first time the malady was locally acquired in the Western Hemisphere. Experts say conditions are ripe for the illness to spread to Central and South America, but they say it is unlikely to affect the United States.

"It is an important development when disease moves from one continent to another," said Dr. C. James Hospedales, the executive director of the Caribbean Public Health Agency in Trinidad. "Is it likely here to stay? Probably. That's the pattern we have observed elsewhere."

Chikungunya fever is particularly troublesome for places such as St. Martin, a French and Dutch island 230 miles east of Puerto Rico, where 2 million tourists visit annually. In an effort to keep the disease from affecting tourism and crippling the island economy, local governments began islandwide campaigns of insecticide fogging last week and house-to-house cleanups of places where mosquitoes could breed.

The French side of St. Martin to the north has had 476 confirmed cases, the largest cluster in all of the islands, while the Dutch side has had 40 cases, according to the Caribbean Public Health Agency.

Already, the travel search engine Kayak said there was a 75 percent decline in searches for St. Martin in the past three weeks, compared to the same period last year.

Searches for Martinique, which has had 364 confirmed chikungunya cases, were down 18 percent.

"When I read about chikungunya, I thought: 'There's a mosquito in St. Martin waiting for me, rubbing its little feet together waiting to get a hold of me,'" said Betsy Carter, a New York City novelist who was scheduled to travel to St. Martin with two other couples in January. "So we all decided not to go."

Carter was particularly nervous, because she had contracted a different disease from a sand fly a few years ago in Belize, which caused half her hair to fall out. Despite having bought insurance, last month the three couples lost \$9,000 they paid to stay at Dreamin Blue, a luxurious villa overlooking Happy Bay.

"The owners said they would spray the house," Carter said. "But what if you want to leave the house?"

Public health and tourism officials on the islands are urging visitors to wear long sleeves and insect repellent high in DEET.

"Not a lot of bookings were canceled, but there were a few people not understanding exactly what this was, thinking it was a pandemic on a large scale," □



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Gunman kills nun, parishioner in Russian cathedral

MOSCOW (AP) — A man employed as a private security guard opened fire Sunday in a cathedral on Russia's Sakhalin Island in the Pacific, killing a nun and a parishioner and wounding six others, investigators said.

Law enforcement officers detained the 24-year-old man at the scene and were trying to determine why he had attacked the Russian Orthodox cathedral in the city of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, the federal Investigative Committee said in a statement. The man worked for a private security firm in the city and was armed with a rifle. His name was not released.

Concerns about security in Russia are especially high because of the Winter Olympics in Sochi, but there was no apparent connection to the games. Sakhalin Island is about 7,500 kilometers (more than 4,500 miles) from Sochi.

The six parishioners who were wounded were hit in the legs and their lives were not in danger, state news agency RIA Novosti reported, citing the regional archbishop.

The gunman entered the cathedral shortly after a service had ended and began shooting at parishioners and religious icons on the wall, priest Viktor Gorbach said in a telephone interview with the LifeNews cable television channel.

He said not too many people were left in the cathedral and some managed to flee, but the nun and a male parishioner tried to stop the attacker and were killed.

The priest said the man, who also destroyed a cross, expressed his hatred of the church. In Moscow, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church honored the dead as heroes. "Those who died today, they in any case died in the temple of God," Patriarch Kirill said after a service in a Kremlin cathedral, the Interfax news agency reported. "They tried to prevent that person from defiling our sacred place. They died as heroes, as soldiers on the front line."

Kirill said the attacker may

be mentally ill or may have been influenced by those who speak ill of the church.

The Russian Orthodox Church has been criticized by those who oppose its

resurgence and symbiosis with the Kremlin under President Vladimir Putin. □



A policeman watches a believer leaving the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014. Law enforcement officers detained a man, who worked as a security guard, and were trying to determine why he attacked the Russian Orthodox cathedral in the city of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, the federal Investigative Committee said in a statement.

(AP Photo/ Dmitriy Sindyakov)

Kiev warns of terrorism threat amid protests

YURAS KARMANAU
Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's security agency on Sunday warned of a heightened risk of terrorism, including from nearly three months of anti-government protests.

The warning raised the pressure on the opposition as parliament tries to find a way out of the crisis.

The Security Service of Ukraine said it was putting its counter-terrorism units on alert, after receiving a large number of bomb threats across the country at airports, train stations,

pipelines and other locations. In what was seen as a warning to the opposition, the seizure of government buildings also would be viewed as manifestations of terrorism, the agency said in a statement.

Some 30,000 people turned out for a rally on Kiev's Independence Square, known as the Maidan, on Sunday, the day the demonstrations usually draw the largest crowds.

Opposition leaders demanded a constitutional reform that would reduce presidential powers and early elections in which

they hope to unseat President Viktor Yanukovich. The measures are currently being discussed in the national parliament, which is controlled by Yanukovich loyalists who so far have rejected those demands.

"The authorities are already scared of us," opposition leader Oleh Tyahnybok told the crowd. "We need to press them further."

The protests started after Yanukovich ditched a key treaty with the European Union in favor of a bailout loan from Russia.

Protesters and police have been maintaining a shaky

truce at giant barricades near a government district in Kiev for several weeks, after three activists were killed in clashes last month. Another one was found dead outside Kiev after being kidnapped from a hospital.

Many activists said Sunday they were ready to resume confrontations with police, if Yanukovich refused to concede to their demands. "We are already tired of standing on the Maidan," said Dmytro Shulets, 47. "Nothing happens without a fight. If talks fail, we will resort to force again." □

Cuba frees jailed Canadian businessman

C. NORONHA

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — A Canadian businessman who served 2 1/2 years of a 9-year prison sentence in Cuba for corruption has abruptly returned to Canada.

Sarkis Yacoubian, president of Tri-Star Caribbean import company, said Saturday that he's extremely happy and excited to be home in Toronto. However, he says he is still adjusting after he was given only 24 to 48 hours' notice before his release.

Yacoubian was arrested in 2011 by Cuban authorities but was not formally charged until April 2013 with bribery, tax evasion and "activities damaging to the economy." He said that because he was expelled from Cuba, he is not subject to transfer conditions that would require him to serve the rest of his sentence in Canada.

"I can't discuss on what grounds I was expelled," said the 53-year-old Yacoubian. "When somebody goes to jail, most of them claim that they were innocent. It's not only the facts that support this for me, but official recognition that supports this," he said. "I'm still confused. They released me, 24-48 hours' notice, I still don't know exactly how this whole thing happened. I'm trying to figure out what happened, who had interest behind it,



Canadian businessman Sarkis Yacoubian goes to court for his corruption trial in Havana, Cuba. Yacoubian has returned to Canada after serving 2 1/2 years of a 9-year prison sentence in Cuba for corruption. He is president of Tri-Star Caribbean import company and was arrested in 2011 by Cuban authorities but only formally charged in April 2013 with bribery, tax evasion and "activities damaging to the economy." Yacoubian said Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014 that he's extremely happy and excited to be home in Toronto.

(AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa)

which were the organizations or companies that did what they did to me. So it's just 48 hours. The decision, nobody knew that. They just said we're going to let you out," Yacoubian told The Associated Press from his mother's home in To-

ronto.

He said that he is willing to share his story but wants to consult with his lawyers, who he said are currently on vacation, before he provides further details about what he calls a "very interesting, exciting story."

"I want to be properly vindicated on the highest level once the facts are there. I've already been officially vindicated, but I just can't tell you how, but it'll come out in the next two weeks," he said.

Yacoubian, who is Armenian, was born in Lebanon, where he studied international relations before coming to Montreal to earn his MBA at McGill University. He then ventured to Cuba, where he spent about 20 years. There, he partnered with the Cuban government on multiple ventures.

"(I developed) probably the third or fourth largest company (in Cuba). I started with \$3,000 and that's where I got millions of dollars of credit from factories, and all my money was confiscated, so there's a story behind the story," he said.

Two months after Yacoubian's arrest, authorities raided another Canadian-run company, the Tokmakjian Group, one of the largest foreign operations in Cuba. Cy Tokmakjian, 73, was arrested September 2011. He remains in Cuba's La Condesa prison with no charges filed.

Peter Kent, Tokmakjian's Member of Parliament, told The Toronto Star that Yacoubian's release had been expected, but that the news that he was back in Canada came as a relief. □

AROUND THE CARIBBEAN

Trinidad company fires 6 in wake of string of oil spills

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad (AP) — Trinidad & Tobago's state-owned petroleum company has fired six employees in the wake of a string of oil spills late last year. Petrotrin President Khalid Hassanal says the six workers had "high degrees of culpability" into spills in Trinidad's southwest region spanning a week in December. They were fired Saturday. It wasn't immediately clear if they will be charged with any criminal offenses. Hassanal says six other workers were found to have a "lesser degree of culpability" and were reinstated. Last month, the government fined Petrotrin \$3 million for violating environmental and reporting standards. Spills of at least 7,500 barrels of oil impacted several communities, with some residents complaining of health problems. Fishermen also said the spilled fuel damaged their equipment and killed fish in waters between Trinidad and Venezuela.

Forty Dominican fishermen held in the Bahamas

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — Forty Dominican fishermen have been taken into custody on suspicion of poaching in Bahamian waters. The islands' military said Sunday that one of its patrol boats detained a 70-foot (21-meter) fishing vessel off Andros Island, the largest and least populated island in the sprawling archipelago off Florida's east coast. It wasn't immediately clear how much fish the boat was carrying some 80 miles (128 kilometers) south of Andros, where conch, lobster and snapper are the mainstay of the local economy. It's the second time so far this year that a fishing boat from the Dominican Republic has been intercepted in waters of the Bahamas. □

Bangladesh:

Factory owners surrender on charges from fire

ELLEN BARRY

© 2014 New York Times

NEW DELHI — A husband and wife whose factory in Bangladesh was consumed by fire in 2012, a disaster that killed 112 employees, surrendered to the police Sunday in Dhaka, the capital. In December, the police filed charges of culpable homicide against the owner of the Tazreen factory, Delowar Hossain; his wife, Mahmuda Akther, and 11 associates, including the factory's manager and an

engineer.

On the night of the fire, more than 1,150 people were at their work stations in the eight-story building, working on a tight deadline to fill orders for international buyers.

When the fire broke out and an alarm sounded, some managers told their employees to ignore the alarm and continue to work.

As the fire spread, many workers found themselves trapped in smoke-filled

staircases or behind windows that were covered with iron grilles.

Bangladesh's garment industry is extraordinarily powerful, both economically and politically, and in the past the state has sought to protect their interests.

Factory owners are rarely held responsible for safety violations.

After the Tazreen fire, the police initially said they did not have enough evidence to bring a case

against Hossain, and investigators suggested that the fire might have been set by saboteurs.

But after activists and lawyers submitted a petition, the country's High Court ordered officials to investigate further.

The high-level government investigation that followed accused Hossain of "unardonable negligence," noting that some of his managers closed collapsible gates to block workers from running down staircases. □



Milton and Bernice Siegal honored at the Radisson Resort and Casino!



PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very special couple whom are loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Radisson Resort and Casino as Distinguished visi-

tors.

The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Mil-

ton and Mrs. Bernice Siegal, of South Yarmouth, Massachusetts. Milton and Bernice are loyal guests of the Radisson Resort and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the weather, beaches,



restaurants, great entertainment and being on Aruba and staying at the Radisson is like being home for them.

When in Aruba Milton and Bernice meet with so many friends they have known through the years, and the Siegals always say that Aruba is the best island in the Caribbean and

they will continue to visit for many more years to come. The certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Germaine Wever representing the Radisson Beach Resort and a big group of staff members and friends of Milton and Bernice. □

The Nichols family honored at Aruba Divi Village Resort

DIVI BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple whom are loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, as Ambassadors of Goodwill, at the Aruba Divi Village. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years.

The honorees were Mr.

Stuart and Mrs. Kathleen Nichols of Shelton, Connecticut. Stuart and Kathleen love Aruba very much for the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants, and Aruba feels like a second home and the people are like a family to them. The certificate was presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Ms. Hilda Mills representing the Divi Village. □





With a growing following of satisfied clients:

More honors on the way for The Blue Lobster Restaurant!

PALM BEACH – Once more The Blue Lobster Restaurant has confirmed that another award is on the way. From very reliable sources this information was passed to management, and of course we cannot wait to share the joy and satisfaction this news brings to all of us so working at the restaurant and to those invaluable clients who made it possible for us to be honored with such important awards in so little time of operations, says Mr. Castano, owner of The Blue Lobster Restaurant.

The Blue Lobster has definitely returned lobster to its proper position in the culinary services on Aruba as it was mentioned at the very beginning when The Blue Lobster was opened back on Oct. 15, 2011. Since then patrons have enjoyed



Caribbean and Maine lobster at its best, prepared and presented in so many attractive ways at reasonable prices. One thing is true is that The Blue Lobster Restaurant has maintained its position as 'The Best

Lobster House of Aruba' for two consecutive years, and it will proudly go into its third year in this position, as already mentioned above. This has been made possible for different reasons. The array of lobster dishes



available to clients, the excellent warmth and professional services provided at this small and cozy place, and of course the very reasonable prices which make it possible for one and all to enjoy this magnificent culinary experience.

As Mr. Castano says, "Good food does not need to be expensive," and that is what The Blue Lobster Restaurant is all about: "Good Food, Good Service and Good Prices."

Inasmuch that in very few cases The Blue Lobster did not reach the expectations of a few clients, the restaurant has escalated to position #21 out of 119 restaurants in the area (As per TRIP ADVISOR), and we took very serious the comments and observations of those who in one way or another let us realize there is always room for improvement. There is a strong commitment to improve in the few areas necessary, and

therefore the staff has been attending seminars related to Self Improvement, Client Services and Goal Setting. While the top management will attend a very important seminar given by a professional trainer at the Aruba Chamber Of Commerce this coming 11-25 of February, 2014.

So all in all The Blue Lobster is doing everything possible to maintain its good name and image as it has already for two years and four months of operations.

We are sure you too will want to be part of this success story, and visit this wonderful place, which has become a must for the Aruba visitors.

On the first year of operations, reservations were 'recommended,' now it is becoming 'a must,' due to the limited space, mainly during Specials Day, when The Blue Lobster turns over at least 3 times the capacity. □

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yellow rice and rich vegetables is what you will be served from Chef Hernandez' kitchen every Monday. Whether choosing Fried Fish Basket for only \$15 or a delicious Red Snapper for \$20, you wish it was Monday every day! Bugaloe is known for fun and craziness, so it was only logical Chef Marc Hernandez likes

to go wild when it comes to his cooking. Caught in the morning, served at night is the true Bugaloe way, maybe this explains its popularity from the start. Crazy Fish Monday is served from 5.30 p.m. till 10 p.m. Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill is open daily from 9 a.m. till midnight. Start your day of right with a delicious cap-



puccino, or walk in to enjoy a casual lunch in between sunbathing. A few nights a week Bugaloe is host to some of the best live bands of Aruba, while you are savoring dinner and enjoying the beautiful Aruba Sunset! Don't forget to make one hour in the day even happier at Bugaloe's daily Happy Hour from 5 till 6 p.m. Reservations are not necessary, just follow your hips to the music and the fun and smiles saluting you! ☐



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Durant scores 41, Thunder defeat Knicks 112-100

By **CLIFF BRUNT**

AP Sports Writer

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) -- The showdown between the NBA's top two scorers turned out to be a mismatch. Oklahoma City's Kevin Durant outscored New York's Carmelo Anthony 41-15, and the Oklahoma City Thunder defeated the New York Knicks 112-100 on Sunday.

Durant, the league's leading scorer, also had 10 rebounds and nine assists. Anthony, the league's No. 2 scorer, finished with 15 points on 5-for-19 shooting for the Knicks. Thunder coach Scott Brooks took Durant out of the game with 1:24 remaining, leaving Durant short of a rare 40-point triple-double by a single assist.

"I got on Serge (Ibaka)," Durant said, laughing. "He missed a dunk and he passed up a shot."

Durant also was largely responsible for guarding Anthony. "He missed some shots that he normally makes," Durant said.

"I just tried to play as strong as I can, contest some shots and not get discouraged when he hits them because he makes tough shots and he's a guy that can get hot.

I just try to rely on my teammates, and they did a great job of helping me out, building a wall behind me, and I just tried to play as hard as I can."



Oklahoma City Thunder's Kevin Durant (35) makes an uncontested dunk against the Orlando Magic during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Orlando, Fla., Friday, Feb. 7, 2014.

Associated Press

Reggie Jackson had 19 points and six assists and Ibaka had 16 points and nine rebounds for the Thunder, who were coming off a 103-102 loss to struggling Orlando on Friday.

Raymond Felton and Amar'e Stoudemire each scored 16 points for the Knicks, who have lost four of five.

The Thunder made 12 3-pointers and shot 55 percent overall.

Oklahoma City led 58-53 at halftime as Durant outscored Anthony 19-7.

The Thunder asserted themselves in the third quarter. Jackson drained a 3-pointer to put the Thunder up 76-64 midway through the period. Durant's 3-pointer gave the Thunder an 81-69 edge, and the Knicks called a timeout. New York cut Oklahoma City's lead to 86-80 early in the fourth quarter on a dunk by Jeremy Tyler, but Oklahoma City pulled away. A 3-pointer by Durant pushed Oklahoma City's lead to 95-86. Oklahoma City led 97-88 with 5:34 remaining when Ibaka was issued a technical foul.

Anthony made the free throw, but the Knicks didn't get anything out of the possession. The Thunder took control from there as a long jumper by Ibaka put Oklahoma City ahead 105-90.

Durant scored his 40th point on a free throw with 1:41 remaining. □

Olympic downhill king: Austria's Matthias Mayer

FRED LIEF

AP Sports Writer

SOCHI, Russia (AP) — Matthias Mayer shut his eyes for a moment, his day's

Austria's Matthias Mayer celebrates winning the gold medal in the men's downhill at the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

Associated Press



work over.

If he had trouble believing what had just happened as he stood before the crowd it was with good reason. The Austrian struck a big upset Sunday in one of the Olympics' marquee events, capturing the men's downhill and upending the elite of his sport.

"It's amazing to be an Olympic champion," he

said.

Mayer has never finished better than fifth in a World Cup downhill.

That proved no obstacle in dismissing the preordained favorites — Aksel Lund Svindal of Norway finished fourth and Bode Miller of the U.S. eighth.

Among the eight gold medalists on Day 3 were: snowboarder Jamie Anderson,

the American slopestyle queen who triumphed in her sport's Olympic debut; Irene Wust, who showed why speedskating is Dutch territory; and Russia in team figure skating, likewise an Olympic newcomer, for its first gold in Sochi.

Continued on page 20

Anderson completes U.S. Olympic sweep in slopestyle

EDDIE PELLIS

AP National Writer

KRASNAYA POLYANA, Russia (AP) — There was a lot of ugliness out on that supersized Olympic slopestyle course Sunday — crashes, splashes, face plants, even a cracked helmet.

As she so often does, Jamie Anderson made things look beautiful again.

The world's most consistent rider came through big under a huge amount of pressure — "I was freaking out," she said — riding clean on the rails and stomping down three high-flying jumps on her second, and make-or-break, trip down the mountain. She scored a 95.25 on that run to make America 2 for 2 in slopestyle's colorful and treacherous debut on the Olympic stage.

"It's kind of a big deal," said the gold medalist, who earlier this winter had conceded she was heading to Russia with some reservations about what the Olympics really stand for. "This is The Event."

Enni Rukajarvi of Finland won silver and Jenny Jones took bronze to give Britain its first Olympic medal on the snow.

A heady piece of history for Jones, the 33-year-old, one-time ski resort housekeeper from Bristol, who was unapologetic in revealing she prepared for the big day by watching "Downton Abbey" back at her place in the athletes village.

Jones calls Anderson a "hippie," and it's true, the 23-year-old from South Lake Tahoe, Calif., likes yoga and meditation — and granola every now and then.

"I think it's fair to say Jamie marches to the beat of her own drummer," American coach Mike Jankowski said. "She likes to do things her way out here."

Much as she wanted to relax while getting ready for her final run, she said it was, indeed, a little disconcert-

ing standing at the top of the mountain, watching rider after rider take a fall. Of the 24 runs in finals, no fewer than 17 of them included a hand drag, a fall or worse — and that wasn't counting Austrian Anna Gasser's failed climb back up the first embankment after she was given the 'go' sign a second too soon.

Isabel Derungs of Switzerland fell off a rail and face planted into the snow.

Silje Norendal, the Norwegian who handed Anderson one of her few losses two weeks ago at the Winter X Games, fell off the first rail, bobbled on the second, then washed out completely on her second jump. Worst of all, Sarka Pancochova of the Czech Republic lost it on the first jump of her second run, the back of her head slamming against the snow. Her body skittered down the hill, flipping side to side, with her legs flopping like a rag doll. Somehow, she got up and rode down the hill under her own power. When she got there, she showed off a pencil-wide crack that ran the length of her helmet.

"Well, it seems broken, but that's what they are for, right?" said Pancochova, who was not seriously injured, according to team officials.

Against that backdrop, and overcast skies, Anderson, who lost her balance and nearly fell on the final jump of her opening run, reached the starting gate for the second.

"I was just visualizing, like, seeing myself already landing and coming down here," she said. "Just trying to believe."

She made a mini-Usain Bolt pose, as if getting ready to arch an arrow, pounded on her snow pants, then took off.

On a course thought by some to be too tough for women, where even Anderson fell and hurt her back during training, she

was almost flawless.

She executed her half-rotating jumps on and off the rails — the most technical part of these runs — without problem, then set up for the show: Cab 720 jump with a grab, switchback 540 with a grab, frontside 720. That's three jumps with a total of 5½ rotations and two fancy grabs of the snowboard. The landings: All perfect. Everyone knew it, including Anderson, who spread-eagled her arms as she crossed the finish line. Safe.

"Jamie is a lot of things," said 19-year-old Karly Shorr, who finished sixth. "Jamie is a leader. □"



Jamie Anderson of the United States takes a jump on her first run in the women's snowboard slopestyle final at the 2014 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

Associated Press

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Los Angeles Lakers' Steve Nash, left, shoots over Chicago Bulls' Kirk Hinrich during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014.

By JOE RESNICK
Associated Press
LOS ANGELES (AP) - Kirk Hinrich scored 19 points, Joakim Noah had 18 points and 13 rebounds, and the Chicago Bulls held off the stubborn Los Angeles Lakers 92-86 on Sunday after nearly blowing a 19-point lead.
Taj Gibson added 18 points for the Bulls, who never trailed against an injury-ravaged Lakers squad missing Kobe Bryant, Pau Gasol, Jordan Farmar, Nick Young, Jodie Meeks and Xavier Henry.
Gasol, who had a season-high 19 rebounds the pre-

vious time the teams met, missed his fourth straight game because of a groin strain.
Center Chris Kaman scored a season-high 27 points off the bench for the Lakers, who won their previous two games following a 3-19 slide that buried them in the race for a Western Conference playoff spot.
Point guard Steve Nash, playing his third game after missing 39 because of a nerve problem in his back, had eight points in 21-plus minutes before departing with 5 minutes left in the third quarter because of irritation in his left leg.

Gibson, Noah lead Bulls to 92-86 win over Lakers

The 18-year veteran and two-time MVP, who celebrated his 40th birthday on Friday with a team-high 19 points in a 112-98 victory at Philadelphia, was hit on the same leg he fractured last season.

Gibson, whose buzzer-beating layup in overtime gave the Bulls a 102-100 victory over the Lakers on Jan. 20 at Chicago, led the Bulls to a 52-46 halftime lead with 16 points. He made his seventh start of the season as Carlos Boozer missed his second straight game with a left calf strain.

The Bulls, who finished their road trip 3-3, opened the game with a 10-0 run while the Lakers missed their first six shots - including an airball by Wesley Johnson on a 3-point attempt from 27 feet.

Gibson's reverse layup increased the Bulls' margin to 15 before Los Angeles scored the next 12 points to slice the deficit to 42-39 with 5:55 left in the second

quarter.

Chicago built its lead back up to 72-53, its biggest of the game, with a 15-5 run capped by Hinrich's 3-pointer with 3 1/2 minutes left in the third quarter.

Down by 13 with 6:37 to play, the Lakers narrowed the gap to 88-84 after Steve

Blake stole the ball from Heinrich and Kaman fed Johnson for a slam dunk that capped a 13-4 run with 48.3 seconds left. But D.J. Augustin, who had 15 points off the bench, sank four free throws in the final 21 seconds to help seal the victory. □

Olympic

Continued from page 18

SKIING:

In a country where skiing is revered, Mayer gave Austria a jolt. A few weeks ago he was not even considered the nation's best shot for gold. But he covered the Rosa Khutor course in 2 minutes, 6.23 seconds and beat Italy's Christof Innerhofer by 0.06 seconds. Norway's Kjetil Jansrud won the bronze. Miller, who dominated the training runs, was so unnerved by the change of visibility he thought he'd have "to do something magical to win."

That was left to Mayer, who enjoys good skiing bloodlines — his father, Helmut, won a super-G silver medal at the 1988 Calgary Games.

FIGURE SKATING:

With Evgeni Plushenko and a captivating Julia Lipnitskaia winning the free skates, Russia took the team event without needing to worry about the concluding ice dance. President Vladimir Putin was among those in a crowd relishing this victory as the Russians drew away from the U.S. and Canada.

Plushenko's body has been battered by 12 operations and he had to convince his federation he merited a spot in Sochi. "All the fans are cheering so hard that you literally cannot do badly because they do everything with you," Plushenko said. "You get goose bumps."

SNOWBOARDING:

The U.S. now has a double

gold hit in slopestyle, with Anderson doing her part a day after Sage Kotsenburg. "Even though it's just another competition, the stage and the outreach that this event connects to is out of control," Anderson said. Finland's Enni Rukajarvi won the silver. The bronze went to Jenny Jones, a 33-year-old former maid at a ski resort who gave Britain its first medal in any snow sport.

SPEEDSKATING:

Another royal visit, more Dutch gold. Wust gave the Netherlands its second victory by winning the 3,000. Skating before her king and queen, Wust won in 4 minutes, 0.34 seconds. Defending champ Martina Sablikova of the Czech Republic took the silver while Olga Graf won bronze for Russia's first medal of the games. Claudia Pechstein, 41 and a six-time Olympian, was fourth.
Wust, her nails red, white and blue like the Dutch flag, held up three fingers, signifying her third Olympic gold medal.

CROSS-COUNTRY:

Switzerland's Dario Cologna had ankle surgery in November, but that now seems ancient. He won the 30-kilometer skiathlon, pulling away at the top of the last uphill section. The three-time overall World Cup winner claimed his second Olympic gold medal. He was timed in 1 hour, 8 minutes, 15.4 seconds.

Defending champion Marcus Hellner of Sweden took silver, with the bronze to Norway's Martin Johnsrud Sundby. □

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Pistons fire coach Maurice Cheeks

By NOAH TRISTER

AP Sports Writer

DETROIT (AP) -- Even by the Detroit Pistons' recent standards, this was an abrupt change.

Detroit fired coach Maurice Cheeks on Sunday after less than a year as coach, with the Pistons languishing well below .500 despite offseason moves aimed at putting the struggling franchise back in contention. Detroit is 21-29, and although the Pistons still have a decent chance to make the playoffs in the Eastern Conference, their new roster has performed erratically.

"This was a difficult decision for the organization to make but we needed to make a change," team president Joe Dumars said in a statement. "We have great respect for Maurice and appreciate his hard work."

A person with knowledge of Detroit's plans said assistant John Loyer will take over as interim coach. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the team had not announced an interim coach yet.

The Pistons haven't made

the playoffs since being swept in the first round in 2009 - in Michael Curry's only season as their coach. Since then, Detroit has gone through two seasons under John Kuester and two under Lawrence Frank. After neither of them could make any real progress, Cheeks was brought in as Detroit's ninth coach since the 1999-2000 season.

In addition to hiring Cheeks last offseason, Detroit signed forward Josh Smith and traded for point guard Brandon Jennings, trying to bolster a roster that already included young big men Andre Drummond and Greg Monroe.

But the mix has been uninspiring for the most part. The Pistons have had problems defensively and have struggled to close out games in the fourth quarter.

The poor attendance that's become commonplace at The Palace hasn't really improved - and Detroit's 11-15 home record hasn't helped.

"Our record does not reflect our talent and we simply need a change," Pistons owner Tom Gores said Sunday. "We have not

made the kind of progress that we should have over the first half of the season. This is a young team and we knew there would be growing pains, but we can be patient only as long as there is progress."

Detroit is only a half-game out of the final playoff spot in the East, but that's largely because so many teams in the conference are having similar problems. The Pistons are only three games better than they were after 50 games last season.

Cheeks became the first coach to leave or be fired after 50 games or fewer with an NBA team since Rudy Tomjanovich, who coached only 44 games for the Los Angeles Lakers in 2004-05, according to STATS. That does not include interim coaches.

"The responsibility does not fall squarely on any one individual, but right now this change is a necessary step toward turning this thing around," Gores said.

"I still have a lot of hope for this season and I expect our players to step up. I respect and appreciate Maurice Cheeks and thank him for his efforts; we just require a



In this Dec. 10, 2013 file photo, Detroit Pistons head coach Maurice Cheeks looks down at the floor during an NBA basketball game in Auburn Hills, Mich.

Associated Press

different approach."

The Pistons have won four of six, including back-to-back blowouts at home against Brooklyn and Denver on Friday and Saturday. They host San Antonio on Monday night, and the team has not made any announcement about who will coach that game. Cheeks previously coached Portland and Philadelphia, a team he won an NBA title with as a point guard. The Pistons gave him his third shot to be an NBA head coach in June.

Gores was in attendance at a recent game and said he thought the team was better than its record.

"I'm not satisfied. Our job is to make sure that our players are at their maximum," Gores said after that Feb. 1 game against Philadelphia. "I'm not satisfied with the job I'm doing. I'm not satisfied with the job anyone is doing."

At that point, speculation centered around the upcoming trade deadline and the possibility that Detroit might shake up its roster again. Now, the Pistons are hoping another coaching change can improve the franchise's outlook.

Detroit made the conference finals six straight years from 2003-08, but the team's fall was swift after that, and rebuilding has been difficult. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Pistons' championship in 2004 - and the atmosphere at The Palace could hardly be more different.

"We're focused on how to make our players the best," Gores said earlier this month. The Pistons became the third major pro team in Detroit to make a coaching or managerial change in the past six months. Jim Leyland of the Tigers stepped down and was replaced by Brad Ausmus after last season, and the Lions fired Jim Schwartz in late December, eventually replacing him with Jim Caldwell. □

Italy beats United States 3-1 in Fed Cup

CLEVELAND (AP) — Karin Knapp won her second match of the weekend to give Italy a 3-1 win over the United States in the first round of the Fed Cup World Group on Sunday.

Knapp defeated American Alison Riske 6-3, 7-5 to secure Italy's victory in the best-of-five series.

She held a 5-2 lead in the second set, only to let Riske tie it at five. But Knapp regained the momentum and closed out the match. "I got a little bit nervous, I got a little bit of emotion," Knapp said. "But I tried to continue my game, to hit the ball hard, to command the game."

Knapp also defeated Christina McHale on Saturday, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1. Camila Giorgi defeated Madison Keys 6-2, 6-1 in Saturday's second match.

Riske fought hard through the second set and appeared to gain control before Knapp shut the door.

"I had to do something differently because she was completely attacking me. I tried to be the first one to go after it," Riske said. "She was serving really well today."

Lauren Davis and Madison Keys of the United States earned a 6-2, 6-3 win in the doubles match against Nastassja Burnett and Alice Matteucci.

Italy moves on to the World Group semifinals April 19-20 to face either Spain or the Czech Republic, whose first-round tie has been extended into Monday because of rain.

"I said this morning, 'If we win we have to jump into the snow.'" Knapp said. "So after, we will all put the



Italy's Karin Knapp, left, is mobbed by teammates after defeating United States' Alison Riske 6-3, 7-5, during a Fed Cup world group tennis match on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, in Cleveland.

Associated Press

jacket on, the scarf on and we will jump in the snow."

U.S. captain Mary Joe Fernandez chose the 46th-ranked Riske over Keys, who is the team's top-

ranked player at No. 37 in the world, as Knapp's opponent.

The United States moves to the World Group Playoff in April. □

Walker hangs on to win at Pebble Beach

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

PEBBLE BEACH, California (AP) — Jimmy Walker led by as many as six shots Sunday in the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am before he had to make a 5-foot par putt on the 18th hole for a 2-over 74 and a one-shot victory over Dustin Johnson and Jim Renner.

"It's drama, man," Walker said on the 18th green. "It was too much for me."

But it was a familiar outcome for Walker, a 35-year-old Texan who only four months ago was regarded as one of the best players to have never won on the PGA Tour. This was his third win of the PGA Tour season, a streak that began in October about an hour away at the Frys.com Open.

Walker joined some exclusive company. He is only the fourth player in the last 20 years to win three times in his first eight starts to a season. The others are Tiger Woods (who has done it eight times), Phil Mickelson and David Duval.

For a brief moment, it looked as though Walker might have a chance to join Greg Norman and Sergio Garcia as players to lose a six-shot lead in the final round.



Jimmy Walker celebrates on the 18th green Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, after winning the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am golf tournament in Pebble Beach, Calif.

Associated Press

He was never seriously challenged until Johnson, and then Renner, put together a strong finish. Johnson, a two-time winner at Pebble Beach, closed with a 66 on a card that included three bogeys. Renner, who had yet to make a cut all year, made five birdies on the back nine for a 67.

Walker made a 10-foot birdie on the 11th hole and was seemingly on his way. But he hit a poor chip on the par-3 12th for a bogey. He three-putted the 13th for a

bogey. He settled down for three simple pars and was two shots clear with two to play. Walker three-putted the 17th, missing a 3½-foot par putt. He tried to play it safe on the 18th with an iron off the tee that found the right rough.

From 25 feet above the hole, he hit the birdie putt too hard and had one anxious moment.

"I hate three-putting," Walker said. "I had two of them back there, and definitely didn't want another

one on the last."

Walker finished on 11-under 277 and earned \$1.188 million, expanding his lead in the Ryder Cup standings to more than \$1 million over Mickelson in second place. The Ryder Cup is based on PGA Tour earnings, though there are still four majors (which count double), three World Golf Championships and The Players Championship remaining. For now, the stars are aligned for Walker better than anything he sees

through his high-powered telescope.

"I just go out and play golf," Walker said. "This is what I want to do and I've worked really hard to do it, to be here, and to be in this position and it's really cool."

Jordan Spieth had to return Sunday morning to complete his third round, which ended with his sixth three-putt of the round for a 78. He faced Pebble at its most vicious throughout the third round, though he bounced back with a bogey-free 67 to at least tie for fourth with Kevin Na (69).

And he hasn't lost his sense of humor.

"Yesterday was a day where you want to play Pebble Beach in that weather once in your life," Spieth said. "You just don't want it be Saturday when you're in the lead."

Chalk it up to another learning experience for Spieth, who said his 36 putts were more a product of not having the speed than the less-than-smooth quality.

"I felt like I needed birdies when I didn't," he said.

Another strong finish belonged to Graeme McDowell, returning to Pebble for the first time since his U.S. Open title in 2010.



Cheyenne Woods of USA plays a shot on the 16th hole during the second round of the Evian Championship women's golf tournament in Evian, eastern France, Saturday, Sept. 14, 2013.

Associated Press

GOLD COAST, Australia (AP) — Cheyenne Woods won the Australian Ladies Masters on Sunday for her first major professional tour victory, holding off 17-year-

old Australian amateur Minjee Lee by two strokes. The 23-year-old Woods, Tiger Woods' niece, closed with a 4-under 69 at Royal Pines to finish at 16-under

Cheyenne Woods wins Australian Ladies Masters

276. Lee also shot 69 in the event sanctioned by the European and Australian tours.

Woods birdied the par-5 15th to open a two-stroke lead, hitting a wedge from about 120 yards to 4 feet. On the par-5 18th, she matched Lee with a birdie, holing out from 1½ feet.

From Phoenix, Woods is the daughter of Earl Dennison Woods Jr., Tiger Woods' half brother.

Woods turned professional in 2012 after an All-America career at Wake Forest and her only previous pro victory came in 2012 in a

SunCoast mini-tour event. In December, she missed the cut in the LPGA Tour's qualifying tournament in a failed bid to earn a spot on the circuit.

She choked back tears Sunday as she spoke of the significance of winning a Ladies European Tour event.

"This is a huge accomplishment for me," she said. "The European Tour has been great to be able to play this past year."

"I've been able to see all of these great players, play with Solheim Cup members ... to be able to come out

here and compete with them and come out on top was huge for me."

Woods said she had learned to live with the pressure of expectation that came with bearing a famous golfing name.

"I've been pro for two years and, for the majority of it, people just think of me as Tiger Woods' niece so now I have a game of my own and I have a title now, a win, which is exciting," she said. "It's nice now to say to people that I can play and I'm not just a name."

"Growing up with the last name of Woods,

High-tech U.S. project tackles low-income word gap

DAVID KLEPPER
Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, Rhode Island
(AP) — Six-month-old Jaiven James doesn't even notice the pager-sized recorder that fits snugly into the pocket of his shirt, recording every gurgle, every cry, every word he hears.

The boy is an early participant in a Providence city project that aims to boost the language skills of low-income children by using recorders to count the words they're exposed to. Studies show poorer children enter school having heard millions of fewer words than more affluent children, a disadvantage that can limit future educational success and occupational opportunities.

"We want to close that gap, and the best way to do it is by training parents from Day 1," says Stephanie Taveras, a social worker who is coaching Jaiven's mother, Ashley Cox, on ways to boost her children's language skills.

The project, called Providence Talks, beat out proposals from more than 300 U.S. cities last year to win a \$5 million prize offered by then-New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg. The voluntary program began last month with 75 families and hopes to serve 2,000 families by mid-2016.

The initiative targets what early childhood development experts call the word gap, a problem that takes a lasting economic and educational toll on America's poor. A landmark 1995 study found that children in families receiving welfare hear less than one-third as many words per hour as their more affluent peers, and they reach age 4 having heard 32 million fewer words than children from wealthier families. Students who begin school with this disadvantage are less likely to succeed academically or professionally later in life. It's a problem with long-term implications for Rhode Island's capital city, where one-third of children live in poverty and two-thirds of kindergarteners enter



In this Feb. 3, 2014 photo, caseworker and home visitor Stephanie Taveras, left, reads a book with Ashley Cox, center, and Cox's 16-month-old son Jaiven, right, at the family's home in Providence, R.I. The city has begun an effort to boost language skills for children from low-income families by equipping them with audio recorders that count every word they hear. During home visits, social workers go over the word counts with parents and suggest tips to boost the child's language skills.
Associated Press

school already behind on national school readiness benchmarks.

Providence Mayor Angel Taveras, who isn't related to the social worker, said he wants his city to prove the word gap can be bridged by giving parents just a little help.

The recorder acts as a language pedometer, counting the number of words and conversations throughout the day and distinguishing between young and adult voices and electronic noises like radio and television. Data from the device can show how often a parent interacts with a child and how often the television is on. Parents of participating children are advised to record an entire day's worth of audio every few weeks. A social worker picks up the device from the home and uploads the data to a computer. The social worker then returns to review the results with parents and offer suggestions for how they can better engage their children.

"The science is solid: Children who hear more language — not just more, but richer language that's

relevant, that's positive — are associated with better outcomes," said Stanford University psychology professor Anne Fernald, who has used the device in her research and who is a scientific adviser to Providence Talks. "Talking to children really matters."

Jaiven's older brother Jaiden has been participating in Providence Talks for just a few weeks but is already seeing progress. The number of words the 16-month-old heard jumped by a few thousand from the day of his first recording to his second. "I was expecting it to go up, but I'm very happy," said their mother, Ashley Cox, 25, who has four sons in all. She said that since enrolling in Providence Talks, she's started reading to her children more, engaging them in more conversations and limiting the time the television is on. City officials insist data from the devices will be kept confidential and it would be nearly impossible for anyone to use the devices to obtain actual recordings of a family's conversations. Still, the idea of city officials strapping recording devices to toddlers at-

tracted the interest of the state chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union. ACLU policy associate Hill-

ary Davis said her organization looked into who would have access to the records and how the privacy of families — or guests who happen to stop by when a recording is underway — would be protected.

"The intent is obviously to serve the families and the community, but there hadn't been any real conversation about how this could be misused," Davis said. "We're not sure the safeguards are 100 percent there yet."

Parents who enroll in the program are asked to sign a release and to inform any friends or family who stop by if the recorder is in use. They're also given two other bits of advice: Don't get the device wet and don't let curious toddlers see the contraption being slipped into the pocket of their specially designed onesie. The device is sturdy, but toddlers can be remarkably clever.

"The key," Taveras, the social worker, told Cox with a smile, "is to do it without him noticing." □



In this Feb. 3, 2014 photo, a digital audio recorder rests on a toddler's bib at a home in Providence, R.I. The city has begun an effort to boost language skills for children from low-income families by equipping them with audio recorders that count every word they hear.
Associated Press

Startup Corner: Search for a niche, find a crowd

JENNA WORTHAM

© 2014 New York Times

Entrepreneurs have a term for outsized problems they want to tackle or bigger-than-life bets they want to make: "moon shots." Examples include Google's driverless cars and Amazon's delivery-by-drone. Tristan Walker decided that his moon shot would be revolutionizing the skin-care

rare for companies to acknowledge that or to market to them directly.

Walker, like a handful of other entrepreneurs, sees a new growth trend, one that recognizes the value - and opportunity - in appealing to audiences that Silicon Valley often overlooks.

"There is opportunity in the niche," he said. "Some of the most successful busi-

"There are still two Silicon Valleys," Hosanagar said.

"Young entrepreneurs in San Francisco, working at a tech firm, surrounded by the tech 1 percent, solving problems for the 1 percent. And there are companies that manage to break through that and become relevant. The Googles, Twitters and Facebooks of the world."



Some of the Bevel line of skin care and beauty products for the African-American market made by Walker & Co., in New York. Chief executive Tristan Walker, once a consultant for the venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz, says entrepreneurs should not hesitate to start out small. "There is opportunity in the niche... some of the most successful businesses started there and broadened out."

(Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times)

and beauty-product industry for African-Americans.

To Walker, who helped build the social media darling Foursquare and held the coveted position of entrepreneur-in-residence at Andreessen Horowitz, the Silicon Valley venture capital firm, it seemed a sure bet. His time at Andreessen Horowitz had given him insight into what makes a good company and what investors are likely to support. In addition, this new business, Walker & Co., would address a problem he and his friends encountered.

"The demographic is starved for a company that cares about it," he said, noting that while blacks tend to be among the early adopters and consumers of social technologies, it is

nesses started there and broadened out."

Given his niche market, however, he did not have an easy time convincing investors. Although he eventually raised \$2.4 million in venture financing, his idea was first met with a "hell of a lot of skepticism," which he welcomed as a challenge.

"The opportunity is pretty profound," he said.

For now, only a slice of Silicon Valley is aware of the overlooked audiences out there. But Kartik Hosanagar, a professor of online commerce at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, said that even the smallest companies would soon have to start paying attention to so-called unconventional markets.

The companies that break out, he said, are successful because they are adept at appealing to all users. But even those tech giants must think ever more broadly if they are to have continued success and growth. Signs suggest that these companies are trying to extend their reach and understand the complexity and diversity of their users and potential users.

In November, The Wall Street Journal reported that Twitter had hired a multicultural strategist to help advertisers target black, Hispanic and Asian-American users. Google has Project Loon, which aims to "use a global network of high-altitude balloons to connect people in rural and remote areas who have no Internet access at all." □

U.S. Factory Report May Not Be as Dire as It Looks

FLOYD NORRIS

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World markets, already nervous over possibly fragile emerging-market economies, tumbled early last week after a survey of U.S. manufacturers showed a surprising drop in the proportion of companies saying their business was improving. On Monday, the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index fell more than 2 percent, suffering its worst day since June.

But that may have been an overreaction. A competing survey of U.S. manufacturers showed a much smaller decline, and surveys of manufacturers in many other countries showed better results.

The negative news came from the Institute for Supply Management, which has gained a reputation for spotting turnarounds in economic activity.

While the institute's overall index fell to 51.3 in January from 56.5 the previous month, much attention was focused on its new-orders index. That index, which reflects the proportion of companies saying new orders improved during the month, plunged 13.2 percentage points, to 51.2.

While that was still a sign of growth - any number more than 50 indicates that more companies said orders were rising than falling - it was also the largest drop in single month in the new-orders index since December 1980, when the figure also fell to 51.2. That drop was followed by a plunge in economic activity after the short-lived recovery from a recession that had officially ended the previous July. The next recession officially began in July 1981 and proved to be a severe one.

With that history, this week's market reaction was understandable. But there are several reasons to doubt that the economy is about to fall into a new recession. One is that seasonal adjustments may have overstated the decline. Another is that a competing survey, done by Markit Economics, a British research firm, showed a much smaller decline in new orders. Markit's survey did not show the boom in new orders that ISM found late last year, but its index now is at a higher level than that in the ISM survey.

In addition, similar surveys around the world did not show similar movements. A global average of manufacturing surveys reported a decline in new orders of just one-tenth of a point, to 54.3. And only French and Russian surveys reported figures less than 50, signifying a decline in new orders.

It is worth noting what the surveys are intended to show - and what they are not. A figure of 60 rather than 55 indicates that more companies are reporting increases in business, but it says nothing about the magnitude of those increases. Moreover, the figures have nothing to say about whether business is good. A company recovering from a severe downturn would answer the survey the same way as one that was showing a small increase in an already excellent business climate.

Even so, it is interesting and encouraging that manufacturers in many European countries are finally reporting increases in new orders. In Greece, new orders were reported as declining in 59 of 61 months through October. But the index rose to the break-even point of 50 in November and was above that level in December and January. In Spain and Italy, where orders were falling early in 2013, the trend has turned positive.

A plurality of companies in most emerging markets are also reporting growing orders, something that was not true as recently as last summer. □

New Microsoft CEO's collegial style sparks hope

RYAN NAKASHIMA

AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It was a fleeting moment once the camera had gone off, but some say it's indicative of the leadership style Satya Nadella brings to his new job as CEO of Microsoft Corp.

Nadella's impromptu town hall webcast had interrupted business meetings between Microsoft employees and outside partners at the company's Executive Briefing Center in Redmond, Washington. Hours earlier, he had been named only the third leader in company history. When the brief webcast was over, he didn't want to hog the limelight.

"If you have to get back to (a meeting) because it's more interesting or important, please..." Nadella said as the town hall transitioned into a light reception.

The gesture is just one example of Nadella's calming, collegial style, which stands in stark contrast to the blustery, passionate, rally-the-troops approach employed by Microsoft's previous CEO, Steve Ballmer.

Experts on leadership say the change in tone is a necessary cultural shift for a mature company transitioning into new businesses while letting go of past successes and missed opportunities.

"It's very symbolic," says Suresh Kotha, a professor at the University of Washington's Foster School of Business in Seattle. "I think that sends a very strong message, that work is important."

"He's saying 'I'm here to help you, I'm humble, I'm willing to listen,'" Kotha says. "Symbolically I think it's very important to see he's separating himself from Steve Ballmer."

Ballmer is known for his larger-than-life displays of emotion. At his farewell address to Microsoft employees in September, he high-fived and hugged audience members, pumped his fists in the air, and even shed tears as the popular 1987 song "(I've Had) The

Time of My Life" played on the sound system. In a video of the event widely viewed on YouTube, he screams: "You work for the greatest company in the world!"

Observers still remember Ballmer's intense competitiveness. At a 2009 company meeting at Seattle's Safeco field, he pretended to stomp on an iPhone he snatched from a Microsoft employee. During a public Q&A in 2012, he slammed Google's Android mobile operating system as "wild" and "uncontrolled."

Compare that to Nadella's comments at a financial analysts meeting in September, where he described how Microsoft's mobile device management software has to handle devices that run on Apple's iOS, Google's Android and Microsoft's Windows equally: "Enterprises are heterogeneous, and we recognized that," he said.

Richard Metheny, a management coach for executive search firm Witt/Kieffer, latched onto comments Nadella made in introducing himself as CEO, about

how he buys more books and signs up for more online courses than he could possibly finish.

"It means he's open to ideas, open to others," Metheny says. "Perhaps he'll have the ability to get Microsoft to loosen up a little and focus on innovation rather than be accused of bringing in a solution that brings in money immediately."

One problem Microsoft faces is its legacy of competing internal fiefdoms, says Douglas McKenna, a management consultant who advised Microsoft from 1985 to 1993 and worked at the company from 1993 through 2001.

Founder Bill Gates and Ballmer believed the clash of ideas resulted in the best rising above the rest, McKenna says. That style of management, coupled with a so-called stack ranking system that graded employees on a bell curve, resulted in a company full of "competitive people who learned that climbing over each other and battling across divisions is the way to get ahead," McKenna says. □



Satya Nadella, the head of corporate software and cloud computing at Microsoft, in Redmond, Wash. Microsoft on Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2014, announced that Nadella would be its next leader, betting on a longtime engineering executive to help the company keep better pace with changes in technology.

(Kevin P. Casey/The New York Times)

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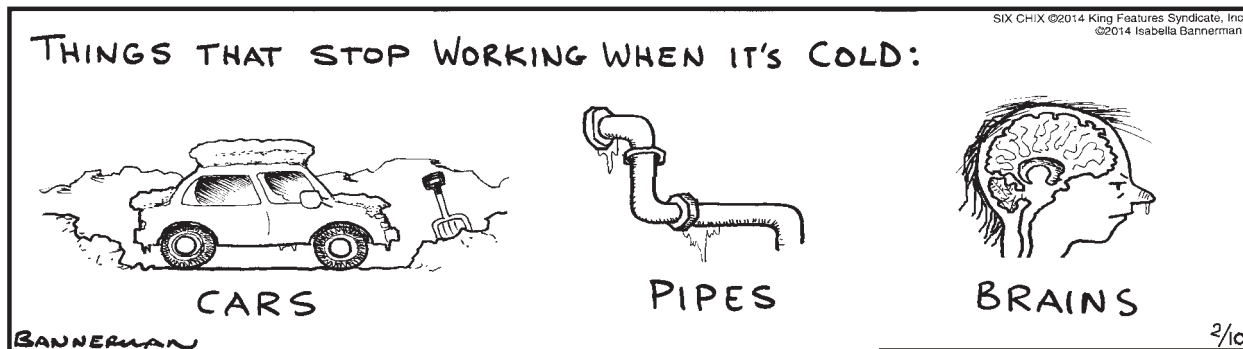
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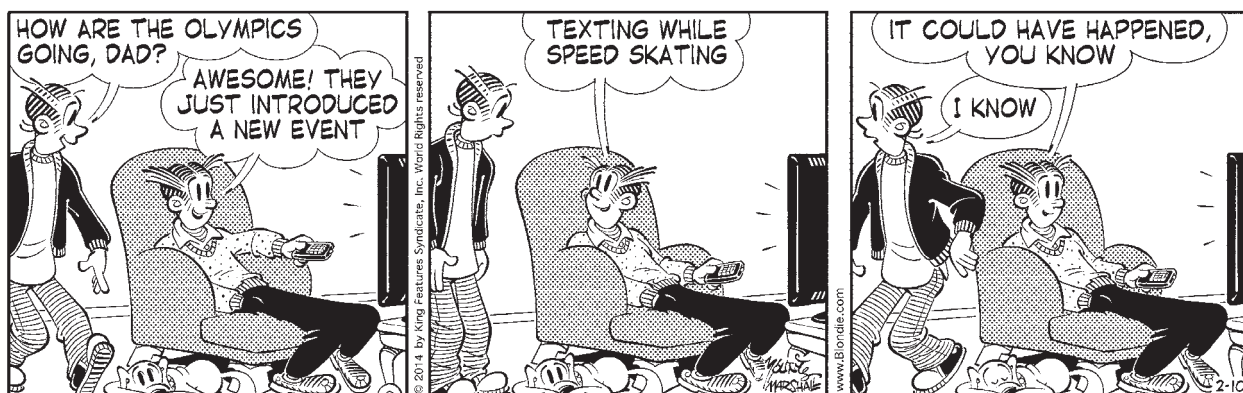
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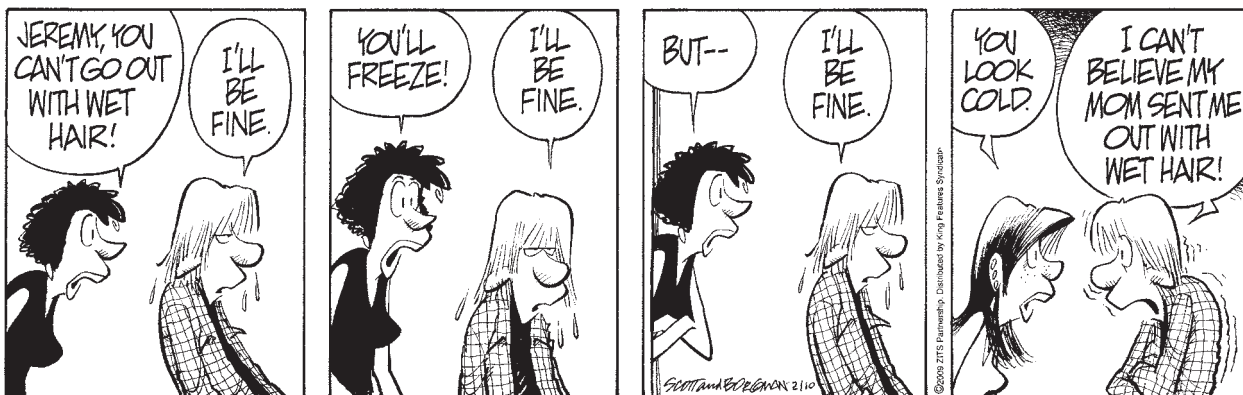
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Conceptis Sudoku

9	2		4		5	3	8
5	8					2	
7			8				4
			7	3			
2	1				3		9
		9		5			
8			3				1
	6					9	3
4	7	3		5	2		6

Difficulty Level ★

2/10

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

1	3	7	5	2	8	9	4	6
9	5	4	3	7	6	2	8	1
8	2	6	1	9	4	5	7	3
4	9	3	2	5	1	7	6	8
2	7	1	6	8	3	4	9	5
5	6	8	7	4	9	3	1	2
3	1	2	4	6	7	8	5	9
6	4	9	8	3	5	1	2	7
7	8	5	9	1	2	6	3	4

ACROSS

- Lively Irish dance
- Largest city in Nebraska
- Up in __; irate
- Border on
- Remedies
- Hawaiian feast
- Liver secretion
- Ridge on a shoe's bottom
- Give a traffic ticket to
- Buy hoping the price will go up
- Dollar bills
- Shirts & halters
- Deteriorate
- Unattractive
- Moving slightly
- Take __; disassemble
- Midsection
- Mongrel
- Uncle __ Rice
- Fill cracks with putty
- Popular detergent
- Rage
- __ care for; disliked
- Cuban line dance
- Australian island
- Aim at
- Traveler's stop
- Pillow cover
- Group of cattle
- No. 1 foe
- Gung-ho
- Native New Zealander
- Ark builder
- No longer sick
- Command
- Saga
- Leg joint
- Requirements
- Modern

DOWN

- Poke
- Wading bird
- Swallow hard
- Dwell in

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13			14						16		
17				18					19		
	20			21					22		
			23				24	25			
26	27	28				29	30		31	32	33
34				35					36		
37				38					39		
40			41					42			
43			44				45				
			46			47					
48	49	50		51	52	53			54	55	
56				57					58		59
60				61					62		
63				64					65		

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/10/14

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

SURE	SHEEP	SLAB
OPEN	PADRE	HOBO
MOLD	UNGRACIOUS	
ENE	ANDY	RENTS
NICKS	PAL	
CATCHY	WANDER	
ALLEY	FARCE	MET
LIED	DEREK	SAGA
LBS	QUEEN	RENAL
ISSUES	CIRCLE	
AIL	RABBI	
STOUT	HOGS	PIE
CONNECTION	BARNS	
AREA	BETTE	ATOP
MESS	SASSY	DENY

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2/10/14

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 41 Vice President | 50 Irritate |
| 42 James or Scott | 52 Unusual |
| 44 Center | 53 ZIP __; part of an address |
| 45 Not ours and not yours | 54 __ and groan; complain |
| 47 Tear to pieces | 55 Ivy League school |
| 48 Bird of prey | 59 Chop down |
| 49 Level; balanced | |

NYC dealers blend in as heroin mills

Continued from Page 8

After subtracting the cost of the kilo, wages and other expenses, the mill operator would turn a \$70,000 profit per kilo.

In the Bronx takedown on Jan. 30, investigators conducting surveillance at a building there stopped a man making an apparent delivery of drugs before seeing another man try to flee out the fire escape of a fifth-floor apartment. Inside, they found 33 pounds of heroin, 18 coffee grinders used to cut the heroin with baking soda, folding tables and chairs where it was packaged and stamps with various brand names.

Once exposed, mills like the Bronx one can be a touchy subject for property owners and their tenants. There was no response to a phone message left with the landlord of the building. Linda Johnson, who lived in a one-bedroom apartment there until a few months ago, said she never noticed anything suspicious.

"I saw people coming and going in the elevator and nobody bothered me," said Johnson, 61. "If it was happening, you'd know it, right?"

Separate operations distribute the drugs to users in the city and beyond.

New York City brands have turned up in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and smaller cities in Connecticut, Hunt said.

The distributors offer customer service intended to remove the fear and stigma from bygone eras. In one case, a dealer riding a three-wheeled motorcycle and a helmet emblazoned with the heroin brand name "Sin City" would direct customers to an exact block in a middle-class Brooklyn neighborhood — code-named "the office" — then pull up alongside their cars and exchange glassines for cash.

Dealers and users in New York and elsewhere often connect on social media sites with a degree of anonymity, authorities say. Phone numbers are exchanged and meeting spots are arranged through texting. Sometimes there's home delivery.

Elizabeth Thompson, a recovering addict who got hooked on heroin and relied on home delivery while going to law school in Philadelphia, described the delivery men who came to her door at an apartment building there as prompt and courteous.

"I never felt unsafe with them," said the 30-year-old Thompson, now policy coordinator with the New Jersey Drug Policy Alliance. "They wanted the business. And I was a good customer for a long time." □

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Bottle released by U.S. scientist in 1956 found

DENISE LAVOIE

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — It was April 1956, and the No. 1 song was Elvis Presley's "Heart-break Hotel." At the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod, scientist Dean Bumpus was busy releasing glass bottles into the Atlantic Ocean as part of his work to track currents. Nearly 58 years later, a biologist studying grey seals off Nova Scotia found one of the bottles in a pile of debris on a beach.

"It was almost like finding treasure in a way," Warren Joyce said Friday.

The drift bottle was among thousands dumped in the Atlantic Ocean between 1956 and 1972 as part of Bumpus' study of surface and bottom currents. About 10 percent of the 300,000 bottles have been found over the years.

Joyce found the bottle Jan. 20 on Sable Island, about 185 miles southeast of Halifax.

He contacted scientists at Woods Hole and dutifully gave them the time and place information Bumpus had asked for in a postcard inside the bottle. His reward will be exactly what Bumpus promised in 1956 to anyone who returned a bottle: a 50-cent piece.

"I didn't want the reward, but they said they are sending it to me anyway," Joyce said, chuckling.

Joyce said the bottle had been sand-blasted over about 75 percent of its surface. He could still read the words, "Break This Bottle," so he did. Inside, there



This January 2014 photo released by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, shows a glass bottle that had contained a message from the institution, which was recovered on Sable Island, Nova Scotia, by biologist Warren N. Joyce of Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Associated Press

was a note from Bumpus explaining that the bottle was among many being released to study the ocean.

In those days, there was no other way to study currents, said Steven Jayne, a senior scientist at Woods Hole.

"We didn't have satellites to track currents like we do now. So the only thing you could do was to see where something started and where it ended up," he said. "That was a pretty good approach."

Using the number on the postcard, Woods Hole workers tracked the bottle found by Joyce to a group of 12 released not far off Nova Scotia on April 26, 1956. Joyce found it about 300 miles from where it was released.



A pedestrian walks in the snow in the Center Square neighborhood on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2014, in Albany, N.Y. Hundreds of schools across upstate New York are closed and authorities are advising against any unnecessary travel as a snowstorm moves across the region.

Associated Press

Weather weary nation asks why such a nasty winter

By SETH BORENSTEIN

AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Cold and snow keep battering the Midwest and East, and even Atlanta was temporarily paralyzed. California has been bone dry. Alaska set heat records.

The wild winter somehow became even more wicked Thursday morning when the national average temperature plunged to a brutal 11 degrees - the lowest temperature of a season of extremes.

A weather weary nation asks a simple question: Why?

The answer is the jet stream, the river of air that dictates our weather. Normally the jet stream stays in Canada or the northern U.S., going west to east in a somewhat straight line. But this winter it has plunged south, creating high pressure ridges and low pressure troughs and taking cold polar air south and east and leaving warm, dry weather to the west.

"We are having an unusual jet stream that's giving us crazy cold weather in the East and the ridiculously resilient ridge as it's called in California," said Weather Underground meteorology director Jeff Masters.

Q: Why is the jet stream do-

ing this?

A: There are three different forces probably at work here, but scientists still need to do more research, said Derek Arndt, of the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C. One is just the random natural variability of daily weather. Another is a mid-length weather feature called the Pacific Decadal Oscillation - think of it as a cousin of El Nino - that warms the northern Pacific and helps push the jet stream south. And finally, a new and controversial theory is that a warmer Arctic region and shrinking summer sea ice from man-made global warming has shifted jet stream patterns, making it wavier and bringing more unpredictable weather.

Q: Is it unusual for the weather pattern to last this long?

A: It doesn't happen often, but it's not that unusual either, said Bruce Terry, of the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Md.

Q: So how cold was Thursday?

A: The national average temperature of 11 degrees is the coldest of this winter and will likely be the coldest of the season, according to calculations by Weather

Bell Analytics meteorologist Ryan Maue. It was computed from temperatures at 7 a.m. EST in the Lower 48 states.

The lowest was minus 34 in Montana and several areas were minus 20, according to the National Weather Service.

Q: Has this been a record winter?

A: No. Given the unusual heat in the West and the cold in the East, they almost balance each other, Masters and Arndt said. So when the final monthly statistics come out, January in the U.S. won't be near record cold.

"When you compare it to the 20th century, it was still cold, but not dramatically cold," Arndt said.

Q: Was this just a U.S. thing?

A: No. Parts of South America and Australia have had much warmer than normal weather. Parts of Europe have been cold and stormy, others record warm. For much of January, Greenland was 8 degrees warmer than normal.

Q: When will it end?

A: Soon enough. In Northern California, heavy rains are coming. A predicted eastern winter snowstorm this weekend is looking less mighty than it did a few days ago.

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'Lego Movie' opens with big \$69.1M box office

JAKE COYLE

AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — "The Lego Movie" clicked with moviegoers, assembling an exceptional \$69.1 million debut at the weekend box office, according to studio estimates.

The better-than-expected result made the Warner Bros. collaboration with the Danish toy company easily the biggest hit of the year so far. A sequel is already in development for the 3-D animated film, digitally drawn to mimic a world composed entirely of Lego bricks.

The film has drawn raves from critics. Co-directors and co-writers Phil Lord and Chris Miller ("21 Jump Street," "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs") gave the film a playful tone to capture the whimsy of a child playing in a box of Legos. Characters are largely voiced by comic actors like Chris Pratt and Will Ferrell.

The film marks the biggest animation hit for Warner Bros., a studio that despite popular live-action franchises has struggled to develop animated hits on par

with other studios.

"I can't imagine this not turning into a long-term franchise," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office tracker Rentrak. "This is such a runaway success that Warner Bros is now a major player in the animated genre."

Dan Fellman, head of distribution for Warner Bros., said the film, made with a production budget of \$60 million, resounded because of the popularity of the Lego brand.

This is the first feature film for the toy company. Fellow toy-maker Hasbro has seen mixed results since the launch of the "Transformers" franchise, which was followed by "G.I. Joe: Rise of the Cobra" and the notorious flop "Battleship." George Clooney's World War II caper "The Monuments Men" opened in second place with \$22.7 million.

Reviews have been weak for the based-on-a-true-story tale about the mission to retrieve artwork stolen by the Nazis.

The Sony Pictures film was postponed from a Dec. 25



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows the character Bad Cop/Good Cop, voiced by Liam Neeson, in a scene from "The Lego Movie."

Associated Press

release because, Clooney then said, more time was needed to finish the visual effects. Clooney served as director, co-writer, producer and star on the film.

"The Monuments Men," based on the nonfiction book by Robert Edsel and Brett Witter, was particularly popular with older moviegoers, with 75 percent of its audience aged 35 and older.

"It's right where we hoped

to be," said Rory Bruer, head of distribution for Sony. "There's a lot of love for George and the ensemble cast."

Sliding to third was the cop comedy "Ride Along," with Kevin Hart and Ice Cube. After three straight weeks atop the box office, the Universal film earned \$9.4 million.

The Weinstein Co.'s bid for a young adult franchise, "Vampire Academy,"

opened poorly with just \$4.1 million. The PG-13 film, based on Richelle Mead's young adult novels, is about mortal vampires at a boarding school.

Before opening in North America next weekend, Sony's "RoboCop" took in \$20.2 million overseas.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. □

DiCaprio, Hill re-team for story of Richard Jewell



Jonah Hill and Leonardo DiCaprio attend the Hennessy Privilege VIP post-party at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival for Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio receiving the Cinema Vanguard Award at the Arlington Theatre on Thursday, February 6, 2014 in Santa Barbara, California.

RYAN PEARSON

AP Entertainment Writer

SANTA BARBARA, California (AP) — Leonardo DiCaprio

says he and "The Wolf of Wall Street" co-star Jonah Hill are "going to come up with something unique" as

they re-team to tell the story of 1996 Olympics security guard Richard Jewell.

Hill will star as Jewell in the

Associated Press

planned film, which was presented to the two actors as they searched for another joint project following the Oscar-nominated depiction of stockbroker excess.

"I think it's such a heart-breaking story and such an interesting story about the 24-hour news cycle: a man becoming a hero and then the world's biggest villain within 24 hours of each other," Hill said in an interview Thursday night. He was at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival presenting an award to DiCaprio and "Wolf" director Martin Scorsese.

DiCaprio is expected to both produce and play Jewell's attorney.

"The whole premise of it is fascinating in its own right. We're going to have to get together," DiCaprio said in

an interview, praising Hill as a creative partner. "When you work with somebody of his talent and his vision, I think we're going to come up with something unique." Jewell was initially hailed as a hero for spotting a suspicious backpack and moving people out of harm's way just before a bomb exploded in the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta, killing one and injuring 111 others. But within days, he was named as a suspect in the blast. He was eventually exonerated and died in 2007 at age 44.

Both DiCaprio and Hill are Academy Award-nominated for their work in "Wolf." DiCaprio was previously nominated for his performances in "The Aviator," "Blood Diamond" and "What's Eating Gilbert Grape." He hasn't won. □

U.S. exhibit highlights early black comic artists

KEVIN BEGOS

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Comic books are full of superheroes and a dazzling variety of characters, but in the early days of the industry one thing was conspicuously rare: black characters. Now, an exhibit in Pittsburgh chronicles some early artists and a publisher who started to break the comic color barrier in the 1930s and 1940s.

The exhibit called "Beyond the Funny Pages" coincides with Black History Month and is being shown through the end of February at the City/County building. It chronicles the contributions of Matt Baker, the first black to work in the industry; Zelda "Jackie" Ormes, the first black female comic artist; and Orrin Evans, the first black comic publisher.

The Toonseum, which celebrates comic art, is helping curate the exhibit. Toonseum Director Joe Was notes: "Even today, the funny pages lack diversity." But decades ago, the situation was even tougher.

Baker was so talented that he was hired in the early '40s by New York's presti-



This Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2014 photo shows one of the pages of a comic book by Zelda "Jackie" Ormes, the first African American woman comic artist, is on display at the City/County building in downtown Pittsburgh.

Associated Press

gious Eisner & Iger Studio, an otherwise all-white organization. He later drew for Marvel Comics, Gunsmoke Westerns, and Playboy magazine.

Amber and Dean Bierkan visited the exhibit Friday and noted that the struggles of black artists are still relevant today. They were struck by Baker's achievements.

"And he had to draw white men and women," Dean Bierkan marveled. "That was the market."

When Orrin Evans came up with the idea of a comic book filled with all-black characters, he faced a backlash.

In 1947, Evans published a single issue of "All-Negro Comics" and noted in the

introduction that he hoped his project would give black artists an opportunity to use their talents.

After that, the big companies that controlled the comics industry "pretty much locked him out. He couldn't get paper. Nothing," Was said. A planned second issue never happened.

Was said it appears the big comic publishers were threatened by the subject matter and the fact that Evans was an independent publisher.

The comics venture failed, but Evans had a successful career as a pioneering journalist for the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.

Ormes, the first black female comic artist, is credited with convincing editors at the Pittsburgh Courier in 1937 to let her draw a comic strip "Dixie to Harlem." It chronicled Torchy Brown's move from the Deep South to New York City, mirroring a real-life shift many were experiencing. Ormes later created a black comic character named Ginger who discussed civil rights, poverty and other controversial topics in the late '40s

and early '50s. That led to questioning by the FBI and allegations that Ormes was a Communist, the exhibit notes.

Chay Tyler, who helped curate the exhibit, said he hadn't previously known much about the history of blacks in the comic industry.

"A lot of it was a surprise to me. Because when I was growing up, I'd never seen a black comic book, period," said Tyler, a program coordinator for the city Department of Parks and Recreation.

It took decades for black comic characters to enter the mainstream, Was said. For example, in the mid-1960s, Morris Turner created "Wee Pals," the first nationally syndicated comic strip featuring black characters — but only about 10 newspapers carried it.

Three months after the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968, 100 newspapers were carrying the strip.

"It took that for white America to recognize, we need to listen to these voices," Was said.



Actor Shia LaBeouf poses for photographers, with a paper bag over his head that says 'I am not famous anymore', on the red carpet for the film 'Nymphomaniac' at the International Film Festival Berlinale in Berlin, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014.

Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Actor Shia LaBeouf hit the Berlin Film Festival in memorable style Sunday, first walking out of a press conference for the film "Nymphomaniac Volume I" and then apparently wearing a paper bag over his head at the red carpet premiere.

A man who appeared to

be the actor posed for photographers in a stylish tuxedo — and a paper bag with eyeholes and the words "I am not famous anymore" written across it. LaBeouf has frequently used the statement on his Twitter page.

The unconventional attire

LaBeouf makes a scene at Berlin film festival

came shortly after the star walked out of a press conference with co-stars Uma Thurman and Christian Slater to promote Lars von Trier's film, the first installment of a two-part drama about a woman's sexual life from girlhood to age 50.

A reporter's question as to whether the actors were worried about the film's sex scenes elicited the response: "When the seagulls follow the trawler, it is because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea. Thank you very much." He then walked out.

LaBeouf's line was borrowed from French soccer player Eric Cantona, who baffled reporters with it in the mid-1990s following his suspension for a flying kick

on a heckler.

The actor has come under fire for borrowing dialogue and story line for his short film, "Howard Cantour.com," which closely resembled a 2007 graphic novel by Daniel Clowes.

"In my excitement and naivete as an amateur filmmaker, I got lost in the creative process and neglected to follow proper accreditation," LaBeouf said on Twitter in December in response to Clowes' publisher's claim that he stole dialogue verbatim.

LaBeouf wasn't the only one making a statement. Von Trier turned up to a photo call sporting a t-shirt with the logo of the Cannes Film Festival and the words "Persona non grata, official

selection."

In 2011, von Trier was ejected from the Cannes event after a bizarre, rambling news conference in which he expressed sympathy with Adolf Hitler.

He said afterward he had been joking, later issuing an apology and then saying he would refrain from future public statements.

At the press conference, Thurman said she enjoyed letting off the "fury of woman scorned" in a monologue von Trier wrote for her in the movie. "It was a real great challenge to memorize seven pages of Lars' female diatribe of rage," she told reporters.

"Lars kept saying I was overacting, but that's nothing new," Thurman added.

High School Maniacal



MAUREEN DOWD

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WASHINGTON - High school never ends.

Chris Christie has given us proof of that, as though we needed it. Still, anyone who clings to high school the way the 51-year-old governor of New Jersey does makes me nervous.

In his hilariously lame attempt to demonize his old schoolmate and hand-picked point man at the Port Authority, David Wildstein, by dredging up stuff Wildstein did as a teenager 35 years ago at Livingston High, Christie has confirmed the biographical, metaphysical and psychological primacy of high school.

On Saturday, Politico published some leaked talking points from Christie's office with these nyah-nyah complaints about Wildstein: "As a 16-year-old kid, he sued over a local school board election." And, "He was publicly accused by his high school social studies teacher of deceptive behavior." As Shawn Boburg of The Record of Bergen County has reported, Wildstein unsuccessfully sued at 16 to get on the ballot for the county Republican committee and then ran for the local school board at 17, even though he was below the legal age requirement. His social studies teacher charged Wildstein with tricking him into signing an endorsement letter for that race. Wait, this is supposed to be good for Christie? That he gave a \$150,000-a-year job to a guy he knew was a wayward, duplicitous teen?

The Washington Post reported this week that Christie wasn't always so scornful of silly adolescent litigation. When Christie was a senior, he and his family considered suing to stop a transfer student from co-opting his role as catcher - even if it meant that the team, which went on to win the state championship, would have to forfeit the spring season. But he thought better of it.

The Record compared the yearbook profiles of Christie with the not-so-wild Wildstein: "Christie, a year younger, was a perennial class president and baseball player who wrote in his senior yearbook in 1980 about high school sweethearts and going to concerts. There are no remembrances, school clubs or sports teams next to Wildstein's 1979 senior picture. The space is blank." It's risible but sort of alarming that, decades later, Christie is boasting that he was more of a big shot than Wildstein in high school, putting down the guy he created a job for and going out of his way to say they were not even friends back when they

were both connected to the Livingston Lancers - Christie as an ebullient, trim catcher; Wildstein as a quiet, bespectacled statistician.

"Well, let me just clear something up, OK, about my childhood friend David Wildstein," Christie said at his marathon press conference in January, a month after Wildstein had fallen on his sword for the governor. "It is true that I met David in 1977 in high school. He's a year older than me. David and I were not friends in high school. We were not even acquaintances in high school." Bristling with narcissism and punitive aggression, he drove his point home: "We didn't travel in the same circles in high school. You know, I was the class president and athlete. I don't know what David was doing during that period of time."

This display makes you think that Christie must have liked lording it over peons even back then, an uncomfortable echo of his office contemptuously impressing its will on the mayor of Fort Lee. Watching Christie throw Wildstein off the sled and then publicly belittle him, it's easy to imagine the deep gratification, deferred by decades, that Wildstein must have experienced turning on Christie. It has become a cliché to portray candidates in their "Breakfast Club" cliques. But the funny thing about Christie's desperate attempt to mine the past to save his once shiny future is that it's not a metaphor.

It isn't that Trenton politics are like high school. They are actually about high school.

Livingston, I presume, is the Hotel California for Christie. He can never leave.

High school looks like the beginning of adulthood and feels like it, but it isn't adulthood. It's some kind of dress rehearsal. It's the first experience of a grown-up emotional and physical life, where you feel the rush of your powers and your vulnerability. Every reversal is gigantic. It's a perfect storm of potency and ignorance, power and inexperience.

High school is the place where people get wounded - somebody else does better, an endless source of injuries, slights and offenses. Everyone comes out of high school needing vindication or revenge or compensation. It's all about somebody else getting the pretty girl or the cute guy or the higher grade or the position on the sports team. Or the opposite: the Biffs, the quarterbacks who look back and realize they can never be that again.

The two kinds of people who never let go are the injured and the injurers, people who got slammed and the prom kings and queen bees who swanned at the top only in their teens. In a way, you could define adulthood as a passage into a time when you realize high school no longer matters.

Christie's senior yearbook quote was "Great Hopes make Great Men."

He's now learned another lesson: Great Heaps of vengeful traffic cones break the Hopes of Men who would be Great. □



Pussy Riot Tells All



JOE NOCERA

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Why in the world did Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, let Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina out of prison?

It was hard not to wonder about that this week as the two formerly imprisoned members of the Russian punk band Pussy Riot made their whirlwind tour of New York: appearing on "The Colbert Report"; dropping in on Samantha Power, the U.N. ambassador; being introduced by Madonna at a huge Amnesty International rock concert at Barclays Center - and, midmorning Wednesday, visiting The New York Times' editorial board.

Pussy Riot became famous, of course, in February 2012, when five of its members, wearing masks, took to the altar of Moscow's main Russian Orthodox church to sing an anti-Putin song. Three of them were soon apprehended and charged with "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred." Nadezhda and Maria were sentenced to two years in prison. (The third member of the band to be charged was given a suspended sentence.)

Then, in late December, with two months remaining on their sentences, the government released them under an amnesty law that seemed plainly aimed at quieting criticism in the run-up to the Sochi Olympics of Russia's

treatment of political prisoners. Or at least those political prisoners well-known in the West.

Just a few days earlier, for instance, Mikhail Khodorkovsky had been freed by Putin after more than 10 years in prison. During that time, Khodorkovsky had become an eloquent spokesman for those who opposed Putin's crackdown on dissent and freedom. But he had also once been Russia's richest man, and he had undoubtedly done some unsavory things in putting together his business empire years earlier. Even though the charges against him were bogus, there were people, and not just in Russia, who thought he was only getting what was coming to him.

But Pussy Riot? You couldn't ask for more appealing activists. Not only had their prosecution been unjust, but they were young and attractive and intelligent and fearless. After they were released, Amnesty International invited them to New York and set about making sure their voices were heard by as wide an audience as possible. If Putin's plan was, in fact, to quiet criticism during the Winter Olympics, it backfired spectacularly.

The conference room on the 13th floor of The New York Times building was standing-room only for Maria, 25, and Nadezhda, 24. We asked the obvious question: Are they worried that Putin would put them in prison again? No, said Maria.

"In the two years since we were imprisoned, the situation in Russia has gotten so much worse," she said.

"And if we couldn't keep quiet about it then, we certainly won't keep quiet about it now."

It was understandable that so many people in Russia were afraid to speak out, they said. Maria noted that many institutions in Russia were based on "a conveyor principle, which stamps out identical things, and that's what they're trying to do to people, too." Nadezhda added that

when the whole country sees completely innocent people being jailed, "then, of course, it is going to make a lot of people become more silent."

It was their firm belief that Western support mattered. Just knowing there were people calling for their release helped sustain them when they were in prison - and, they were convinced, ultimately helped bring about their release. "The lesson that we learned from this is that Putin is concerned with the opinions of the Western press," said Nadezhda. She urged the West to push for the release of less-well-known prisoners "who perhaps deserve to be freed even more than we did." She mentioned especially those who had been arrested on May 6, 2012, while protesting "the rigged elections right before the inauguration" of Putin. They had been in prison ever since. Their sentencing is set for Feb. 21 - conveniently after the Olympics. Eventually, the talk got around to what it was like to be in a Russian prison.

"We were constantly watched," said Maria; in Russia, she added, "the more they watch you, the harder your life is." Nadezhda said that in some prison colonies, prisoners worked 16 to 20 hours a day. For punishment, prisoners were sometimes locked outdoors, even in the cold and the rain, for eight hours at a stretch. Yet despite the miserable conditions, Nadezhda described their time in prison as "a very important and educational experience," and said that they were "going to apply the lessons we learned in our future work." They plan to push for prison reform when they return to Russia; one of the places they planned to visit while in New York was Rikers Island.

By the end of the meeting, I wasn't wondering anymore why Putin let them out of prison. The more powerful question was what kind of government would put people like Maria and Nadezhda in prison in the first place? □

Tonight at 8PM at Palm Beach Plaza Mall:

Aruba's Majestic Carnival Season Comes To Life!



PALM BEACH - Palm Beach Plaza Mall new majestic carnival season has started at Aruba's largest mall. The Aruba Carnival is a thrilling show of over-the-top pagentry, produced by thousands and delighting and uniting the entire country. Here's the scoop on how it began.

Carnival was born in 1954, as a series of small street festivals. The Tivoli Club, Aruba's oldest private social club, was the first to have a pre-Lenten celebration in Oranjestad in February 1944. The Allied victory of World War II was commemorated by an

Aruba Festival - a large parade in San Nicolas comprised largely of Caribbean-English immigrants who came to Aruba to work at the Lago Oil Refinery. The first steel and brass bands debuted a few years later and small parades sprouted here and there.

Tonight at 8PM, Palm Beach Plaza Mall will have a great Carnival Show where you can experience for yourself the taste of Aruba's Carnival culture with the opportunity to take pictures with the majestic carnival dancers with carnival costumes. Come and enjoy the show! □

